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ABSTRACT

This guide provides Vermont school districts with resources for offering equal education to limited-English-proficient students. It is organized according to a series of legal obligations to this population. The first four sections outline education-related rights and obligations, provide background information on second language acquisition and cultural diversity, discuss program planning and development for this population, and outline recommended steps for the school district to follow in serving students of English as a Second Language (ESL). Support and administrative materials are appended to each of these sections. The five subsequent sections detail those steps: (1) identification of non-English-language-background (NELB) students, both enrollees and previously-enrolled students; (2) screening of NELB students; (3) Initial assessment of NELB students for placement; (4) placement and provision of appropriate services; and (5) monitoring and guiding student progress and program effectiveness. Resource materials or sources are provided for each step. (MSE)

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SERVING STUDENTS LEARNING ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE: A Guide for Vermont Educators

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SERVING STUDENTS LEARNING ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE: A GUIDE FOR VERMONT EDUCATORS

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Serving Students Learning English as a Second Language: A Guide for Vermont Educators

by

James L. McCobb
Title IV National Origin Consultant

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STATE OF VERMONT
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
120 State Street
Montpelier, VT 05620-2501

Dear Educator:

I am pleased to introduce you to *Serving Students Learning English as a Second Language*. Over the past ten years, the number of Vermonters who speak English as a second language grew at a rate almost four times that of the general population of the State. As a result, school districts across the State are experiencing an increase in students who are in need of English as Second Language (ESL) services. In 1974, the United States Supreme Court in the case of *Lau v. Nichols*, held that the failure of a school district to provide services designed to improve English language skills for children whose primary language was not English, effectively denied them equal participation in the educational program offered by the school in violation of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. The Court stated:

> Under these ... standards, there is no equality of treatment by merely providing students with the same facilities, textbooks, teachers and curriculum; for students who do not understand English are effectively foreclosed from any meaningful education.

The purpose of this guidebook is to provide school districts with the resources necessary to operate programs that will provide equal educational opportunities to these students. The guidebook is divided into chapters on Legal Requirements, Second Language Acquisition and Cultural Diversity, Program Planning and Development, Identification, Screening, Assessment, Placement and Provision of Appropriate Services, and finally, a section on Monitoring and Guiding Student Progress and Program Effectiveness. Also included for your convenience is an outline for designing your own policies and procedures. I think you will find this guide to be a useful resource.

Richard P. Mills,
Commissioner of Education

The University of Vermont

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND SOCIAL SERVICES
OFFICE OF THE DEAN, WATERMAN BUILDING
BURLINGTON, VERMONT 05405-0160

MESSAGE FROM JILL M. TARULE, DEAN
UVM COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND SOCIAL SERVICES

It is with pride that I join Commissioner Mills in introducing this guide, *Serving Students Learning English as a Second Language: A Guide for Vermont Educators* which has been prepared for Vermont Educators by the Language and Cultural Affairs Program of the Rural Education Program in our college.

For years now, Vermont has had considerable diversity in the state and in its' schools - often relatively invisible. This text is designed to provide educators with a resource for their work with a particular - and growing - aspect of this diversity: those with limited English proficiency and for whom English is an entirely new language to be learned. As such, it is intended to help educators in their task not only with these particular students, but also with creating classrooms and learning environments that are supportive of and welcoming to all Vermont children and their families.

We hope you find this a useful and helpful resource and we look forward to working with Vermont educators to achieve these important goals.

An Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Employer

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I owe thanks to a great many people for their assistance in one way or another with this project. I would like to express my appreciation to Bob Parker for his generosity in letting me borrow from training materials he has developed as a consultant for the New England Multifunctional Resource Center. I am particularly grateful to Alicia Daniel, my wife, and Maureen Brown, my colleague, for their help in reviewing the content and form of the guide over many months. Marilyn Muirhead of the Evaluation Assistance Center-East provided many hours of valuable phone consultations and expertise, as well as resources. Karen Richards at the Vermont Department of Education, Jean Kiedaisch at the University of Vermont Writing Center, ESL consultant Caroline Linse, and ESL teachers Sue Blethen, Jan Abbott, and Heidi Western also took time to review the final draft and give their written comments. Sue Biggam at the State Department of Education gave important suggestions with her knowledge of assessment. Three organizations--Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages, the Region I Office for Civil Rights, and the Center for Applied Linguistics--were especially attentive as I searched for information and contacts in the field.

And now, to the production stage. Sherry Boardman's hard work and computer skills have been a real godsend. For the wonderful artwork on the cover, I thank Burlington artist Bonnie Acker. Finally, without the support of the other Language and Cultural Affairs Program staff, including Director Jerry Robinson, Aida Cases and Marisha Kazeniac, completion of this guide would have been impossible.

And to all you who are not mentioned individually but have helped in small ways with this project, you know who you are and I thank you.

INTRODUCTION

Awareness is growing among educators in Vermont that students learning English as a Second Language (ESL) bring to schools diverse linguistic, cultural, educational, and personal experiences and, therefore, open a window for us into other parts of the world. As more teachers, administrators, and other educators experience firsthand what it means to teach ESL students, we also discover what these students can teach us. More than 1600 students in Vermont schools have a primary (first acquired) or home language other than English. Over fifty different language groups and cultures, from Czech to Chinese, are represented in our schools. Whether your school has one student or one hundred, a staff that supports a full educational program for ESL students can make a difference in a child's life--now and for years to come. In turn, ESL students enrich the classroom and school environment with their uniqueness and model linguistic and cultural skills we all need in an increasingly multicultural society.

If you have ever had ESL students in your classroom or school, you know the challenge of providing them a high quality education. This guide was written with people like you in mind! It is also written for the dozens of people who will be involved in educating ESL students for the first time this year. The Vermont Department of Education's commitment to seeing that ESL students statewide have equal access to meaningful education has also been a strong motivating force behind this guide.

This year marks the twentieth anniversary of the Lau decision, the landmark Supreme Court ruling which for the first time defined the right of language minority students to meaningful education. This guide is organized according to a set of legally required obligations, which grew out of a genuine public concern that education be equally available to *all* children. Readers can follow Steps One through Five and find specific information relating to each requirement.

In addition to stating legal requirements, this guide is designed to:

- Familiarize district or school-based teams with major language, cultural, and educational issues of ESL students in Vermont;
- Highlight resources for program development including articles and lists of organizations and reference materials;
- Include reproducible forms which teams can use to gather valuable student information and to create effective educational programs;
- Provide interactive guides as hands-on tools for ESL Coordination Teams, (i.e., Flowchart and Guide for Writing a Policy and Procedures).

Finally, it is not expected that this guide will answer every question or concern. It is meant to stimulate discussion about how we as individuals, schools, state organizations, and communities can work together to discover new and better ways to educate ESL students. Part of this discovery is opening our hearts, our minds and our classrooms to the many ways we can learn from them.

As you work with ESL students in your classrooms using this guide, you will no doubt discover ways to improve it. Your comments and suggestions are appreciated and will assist in updates and revisions. The Language and Cultural Affairs Program staff looks forward to working with your school/district as a resource in designing quality educational services for ESL students.

Jim McCobb

COMMON ACRONYMS

ESL TERMS

BICS	Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills
CALP	Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency
ESL	English as a Second Language
ESOL	English to Speakers of Other Languages
FEP	Fluent English Proficiency
L1	Primary (First Acquired) Language
L2	Second Language
LEP	Limited English Proficiency
NELB	Non-English Language Background
NEP	Non-English Proficiency
TEP	Transitional English Proficiency

ORGANIZATIONS

CCSSO	Council of Chief State School Officers
CHIME	Clearinghouse for Immigrant Education
EAC-EAST	Evaluation Assistance Center/East
LCAP	Language and Cultural Affairs Program
LEA	Local Education Agency
META	Multicultural Education, Training and Advocacy
MRC	Multifunctional Resource Center (New England)
NAAPAE	National Association of Asian and Pacific American Education
NABE	National Association for Bilingual Education
NCAS	National Coalition of Advocates for Students
NCBE	National Clearinghouse for Bilingual Education
NCRCDSLL	National Center for Research on Cultural Diversity and Second Language Learning
NECME	Northeast Consortium for Multicultural Education
NMCI	National Multicultural Institute
NNETESOL	Northern New England Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages
OCR	Office for Civil Rights
SDE	State Department of Education
TESOL	Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages

ESL TESTS

IPT	Idea Proficiency Test
LAB	Language Assessment Battery
LAS	Language Assessment Scales
SLEP	Secondary Level English Proficiency Test

LEGAL REQUIREMENTS FOR SERVING STUDENTS WITH LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY

OVERVIEW

The U.S. Constitution, federal legislation, federal and U.S. Supreme Court decisions, and federal and state policy protect the education rights of students with limited English proficiency (LEP)[1] and set standards for state and local education agencies to follow in their efforts to provide them with equal educational opportunities.

The laws, court decisions, and policies most relevant to Vermont educators, parents and community members are cited in this chapter. They guarantee five basic rights to LEP students (META, 1991b):

1. **Right to freedom from discrimination**
2. **Right to education programs which are responsive to students' language needs**
3. **States' obligation to protect rights of students with limited English proficiency**
4. **Rights of parent/guardian(s) of LEP students**
5. **Right to appropriate special education testing and programs**

For further information on the legal rights of LEP students and their parents in U.S. public schools please refer to the list of legal authorities and references at the end of this chapter.

EDUCATION RIGHTS & OBLIGATIONS

1. Right to freedom from discrimination:

Federal Laws

- *U.S. Constitution, Fourteenth Amendment Equal Protection Clause* (1868)--" . . . No State shall . . . deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws." Bars states and public schools from denying students their right of access on the basis of race, national origin, alien status, and gender.

- *Title VI of the Civil Rights Act* (1964)--" . . . No person in the United States shall, on the ground of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance." Further prohibits discrimination in student admissions, student access to courses and programs, and student policies and their application.

---

[1]The acronym "LEP" is used in this chapter. It stands for "Limited English Proficiency." Because this term seems to infer that students learning English as a Second Language have a deficiency, a conscious decision has been made to use the acronym "ESL" instead of "LEP" throughout the rest of the handbook. ESL students are at different stages of acquiring English, but are not "limited." In fact, they have a valuable asset in their potential bilingual/bicultural skills. However, the term "LEP" is used in this chapter on legal requirements because it is still used as a federal definition and is quoted here in federal and state laws and policies. Readers still need to be aware of this acronym.

State Law

- *Vermont Public Accommodations Act, 9 V.S.A. Section 4502*-- prohibits discrimination in schools on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, and disability. This law is enforced by the Human Rights Commission, which investigates complaints of discrimination in the provision of services, harassment or unfair treatment.

- *Vermont State Board Manual of Rules and Practices*--Rule 1250 requires that in order to promote equal educational opportunity, no student shall be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subject to discrimination based on sex, race, color, creed, national origin, sexual orientation or solely by reason of disability or handicapping condition.

Federal Policy

- *Office for Civil Rights Memorandum: May 25, 1970; 35 Federal Register 11595 (1970)*-- Requires school districts to take affirmative steps to provide equal access to educational programs for students with *limited proficiency in English*. Prohibits denying access to any instructional programs - whether college preparatory, gifted & talented, vocational, computer, compensatory or special education - on the basis of English language skills. Also prohibits tracking by the school system of LEP students into lower-level ability groups or vocational programs without consideration of students' personal goals. Requires schools to show how segregation of students is preparing them to participate in their other instructional programs. Such programs "must not operate as an educational dead-end or permanent track."

2. Right to education programs which are responsive to students' language needs:

U.S. Supreme Court Decision

- *Lau v. Nichols* (1974)--Supreme Court ruled that Title VI of the Civil Rights Act obligates schools to rectify language barriers which hinder limited English proficient students from participating fully in their educational programs. Found that (a) schools were not providing LEP students with "equal educational opportunity" simply by providing them with "the same teachers, facilities, textbooks and curriculum" and (b) gave the Office for Civil Rights the authority to establish compliance regulations.

  The Lau decision did not prescribe *specific steps* which a school district must take to accommodate students whose English is limited.

Federal Law

- *Equal Educational Opportunities Act (EEOA), 20 U.S.C. Section 1703 (f)* (1974)--As a result of the Lau Decision, the Congress of the United States passed a federal law which sets the standard for determining whether a school district is meeting its legal obligations to LEP students. These standards are found in the EEOA, Section 1703(f). The Act requires that *no educational agency* (school, school district, county, or state department of education) shall deny equal educational opportunity to any student on account of race, color, sex, or national origin. Section 1703(f) defines "the failure by an educational agency to take *appropriate action to overcome language barriers that impede equal participation by its students in its instructional programs"* as a denial of equal educational opportunity (META, 1991b, 2-3).

  The Act requires that students with limited English proficiency receive language assistance and academic support which enables them to learn equally from the educational program. However, it does not mandate a specific program for language instruction. Due to the generality of the language in Section 1703 (f), it is necessary to look at federal court decisions for guidance in what constitutes "appropriate action" to help students overcome language barriers that impede their learning.

Federal Court Decisions

- *Castañeda v. Pickard*[2] (1981)--The most important decision interpreting Section 1703(f) of the EEOA is the Castañeda v. Pickard case heard by the Fifth Circuit Federal Court of Appeals. The Court determined that in order to comply with Section 1703(f) *school districts have two basic obligations toward students who are not proficient in English:*

  1) To provide a language development program through which these students can learn the English language skills of comprehension, speaking, reading and writing necessary for learning and achieving in English-only instruction with their English-speaking peers;

  2) To ensure that these same students do not suffer academic losses or setbacks because of their lack of English and that they be given equal access to the same substantive knowledge conveyed through the school/district curriculum provided to that of their English-speaking peers.

[2]The description of the Castañeda case is taken verbatim from *The Rights of Limited English Proficient Students* (META, 1991b, 3).

The Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals provided standards for determining whether or not a school district has met the obligations of the Equal Educational Opportunities Act, Section 1703(f). These are referred to as the *Castañeda standards*:

1. That the school/district's language development and content area instructional programs for LEP students be based on (a) an educational theory recognized as sound by experts in the field [of English as a Second Language/Bilingual Education] or (b) an experimental theory at least considered legitimate by some experts in the field.

2. That the school/district commit the personnel, materials, training and other resources to make sure that the "sound theory" is carried out as it was meant to be. The court considered well-trained teachers to be the most important of the necessary resources.

3. That the school/district conduct regular ongoing assessment to ensure that the language barriers are actually being overcome as a result of the school district's educational program; and to ensure that while students are learning English they are not suffering academic losses in other subjects as a result of their not speaking English.

4. If the assessment indicates that the students are not learning English and are not keeping up with the other school subjects as a result of the educational program, the program must be changed to ensure that educational goals are met.

Other Circuit Courts of Appeal have adopted these standards as well. Along with subsequent court decisions, they have set a strong precedent for local courts to follow. All schools/districts must fulfill these federal legal obligations whether or not there is state law pertaining to the education of LEP students.

- *Keyes v. School District #1 (1984)*--A U.S. District Court found that a Denver public school district had failed to satisfy the standards set by the Castañeda case, because it was not adequately *implementing* its chosen program for educating limited English proficient Hispanic students with adequately trained and qualified staff, appropriate curricula and evaluation of results (Lyons, 1988).

Federal Policy

The Office for Civil Rights (OCR) has issued several documents articulating its policies on the provision of educational services to LEP students.[3] Collectively, these documents reflect OCR's interpretation of federal legislation, as well as federal and U.S. Supreme Court decisions. The Office for Civil Rights uses these standards when determining whether a school district is in compliance with its Title VI policies for LEP students.

[3]See Appendix A, p. 15 Legal References for specific U.S. Department of Education/Office for Civil Rights documents.

According to OCR policy statements, school districts must meet the following ***"bottom-line"*** requirements (Parker, 1993):

- ***identification procedures***--identify all limited English proficient students who need an alternative instructional program;

- ***assessment***--classify and diagnose the LEP student's present English proficiency to determine the kind and quantity of service to be provided;

- ***placement***--once identified and assessed, place in an appropriate instructional program;

- ***provision of alternative instructional program***--provide "sufficient and appropriate" direct English language assistance program and content area instruction until the student is able to participate on grade level.

  "Appropriate services" means that the program is based on the student's English proficiency needs and current program and instructional practices for second language learners. It ensures qualified staff, sufficient hours of instruction based on student's proficiency level, and adequate facilities. Effectiveness of the program is evaluated periodically to evaluate how well it is working for the student. If the program is not working after a reasonable period of time, it should be modified.

- ***monitoring***--assess the student periodically using multiple criteria to determine instructional needs, evaluate progress and reclassify English language proficiency level, and exit from special alternative instructional program when the student meets multiple criteria for fluent English proficiency. Monitor the student after exit from the ESL program to ensure successful transition.

A publication of the National Committee for Citizens in Education entitled *"Rights of Students with Limited English"* specifies other educational rights of LEP children which are consistent with OCR policy. These include the right . . .

- "to receive special English language instruction regardless of the number of LEP students in the school;

- to be given tests, free of cultural bias, and to be tested in their own language for initial screening and assessment purposes or special education evaluation;

- to be placed in special education classrooms only when there is a disability and not because of limited English;

- to be placed in a classroom appropriate to their age, grade level and abilities;

- to attend regular classes in art, music, and physical education;
- to participate in extracurricular activities and vocational training programs;
- to remain in a special program for as long as needed;
- to attend a regular classroom when the student is proficient in English."

State Policy

Two memos issued by the Vermont State Department of Education interpret federal law regarding the right to education programs which are responsive to the needs of ESL students.

- *Commissioner Mill's 5/7/91 Memo* (Appendix A, p. 11) to school districts provides a summary of legal responsibilities for serving ESL students. A follow-up memo on 3/1/94 (Appendix A, p. 10) states that all school districts are required to have a policy and procedures.

3. States' obligation to protect rights of students with limited English proficiency:

Federal Court Decisions

- *Idaho Migrant Council v. Board of Education* (1981)--The Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals held that state educational agencies (SEAs) are also covered by Section 1703(f) of the EEOA and are thus obligated to take "appropriate action to overcome language barriers that impede equal participation by students in state public schools" (NCAS, 1991).

- *Gomez v. Illinois State Board of Education* (1987)--The Seventh Circuit Court of Appeals concurred with the Ninth Circuit in *Idaho Migrant Council v. Board of Education* that state education agencies (SEAs), as well as local education agencies (LEAs), are required to ensure that the needs of LEP children are met and that equal educational opportunities are provided in the public schools statewide (NCAS, 1991).

4. Rights of parents/guardians of LEP students:

Federal Policy

- *May 25th Memorandum; 35 Federal Register 11595 (1970)*--Explained that Title VI is violated when parents/guardians whose English is limited do not receive notices and other information from the school in a language they can understand.

The publication of the National Committee for Citizens in Education entitled *"Rights of Students with Limited English"* specifies other rights of parents/guardians which are consistent with OCR policy. Parents have the right . . .

- "to insist that the school provide language assistance services as required by law;

- to be informed of:

  -the reasons why their child needs a language assistance program
  -the nature of the program and alternative programs which might be available
  -the educational objectives of the program
  -the progress of their child in such a program;

- to refuse to have their child participate in a language assistance program;

- to request a translator from the school for parent/teacher conferences, meetings with the school principal, or for any communication between them and the school, if needed;

- to organize into groups, and participate in advisory councils;

- to request implementation, expansion or improvement of existing programs."

5. Right to appropriate special education testing and programs:

Federal Law

- *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) (1991) 20 U.S.C. 1401 et seq.*-- requires non-biased, multidimensional assessment, including culturally and linguistically appropriate testing and evaluation materials; procedures administered by qualified personnel in the child's primary language or mode of communication; "due process procedures, including notification to parents in their native language, parents' permission for individual evaluation, and parental involvement and approval of their child's individual educational program" (Ambert, Dew, 1982).

- *Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act (1973)29 U.S.C. Section 706*-- requires:

  1) the provision of a free, appropriate public education (i.e., regular or special education and related aids and services that are designed to meet the individual educational needs of disabled persons);

  2) that tests to determine eligibility accurately reflect the student's aptitude or achievement level or whatever other factor the test purports to measure, rather than speaking skills;

3) that in interpreting evaluation data and in making placement decisions, information shall be drawn from a variety of sources, including social or cultural background, and adaptive behavior.

State Law

- *Vermont State Board Manual of Rules and Practices; Vermont State Regulations on Special Education*,--Rule 2362.2.5 requires that special education evaluation procedures be provided and administered in the native language of the student when feasible and that evaluation procedures be selected and administered to as not to be racially or culturally biased.

Federal Court Decisions

- *Jose P. v. Ambach (1979)*-- expanded the rights of language minority children "to require the consideration of linguistic and cultural factors in their evaluation for placement and in the actual provision of special education instruction" (Ambert & Dew, 1982).

- *Diana v. State Board of Education(1973)*-- "established that testing be done in the child's primary language, the use of 'nonverbal tests', and the requirement to obtain extensive supporting data to justify special education placement" (Kretschmer, 1991).

- *Larry P. v. Riles, 793 F.2d 969 (9th Cir. 1986)*--barred California school districts from using IQ tests in assessment of African-American pupils referred for special education on the grounds that the IQ tests were racially and culturally biased.

Federal Policy

- *May 25th Memorandum, 25 Federal register 11595 (1970)*-- announced the Office for Civil Rights' overall policy on the issue of special education with regard to LEP students, i.e. that school systems may not assign students to special education programs on the basis of criteria that essentially measure and evaluate English language skills. Stated that both Section 504 and Title VI legal requirements must be considered when conducting investigations on this issue.

- *September 1991, Office for Civil Rights' Policy Update on Schools' Obligations Toward National Origin Minority Students with Limited-English Proficiency (LEP students) (1991)*-- discusses OCR policy on conducting compliance reviews regarding the issue of placement of LEP students into special education programs where there are indications that LEP students may be inappropriately placed in such programs, or where special education programs provided for LEP students do not address their lack of English proficiency. States that compliance prohibits policies of "no double services": that is, refusing to provide both alternative language services and special education to students who need them.

- *Office for Civil Rights' Booklet: The Provision of an Equal Education Opportunity to Limited English Proficient Students (1992)*--recommends steps for preventing misplacement of LEP students in special education due to limited English skills rather than an exceptionality; these include assessing in student's primary or home language and ensuring that accurate information regarding the student's language skills in English and the student's primary language is taken into account in evaluating assessment results.

State Policy

- *Vermont State Department of Education Internal Memo regarding relationship between ESL and Special Education (1990)*--outlines additional protections under IDEA and Section 504 for ESL students. Discusses issues of notice/consent; evaluation; placement and provision of services.

MEMORANDUM

TO: Superintendents and Principals for Distribution to all School Districts
FROM: Richard P. Mills, Commissioner of Education
DATE: March 1, 1994
RE: Limited English Proficient (LEP) Students

The Federal Office for Civil Rights (OCR) recently investigated a Vermont school district and found that it did not have proper policies and procedures for identification, assessment, and programming for limited English proficient students, as required by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Because the State Department of Education has an affirmative duty to enforce the civil rights of all students, including limited English proficient students, and because of the OCR finding, I am issuing this memorandum as a reminder of the legal responsibilities of school districts in this area.

I am asking that you review my Memorandum of May 7, 1991 and OCR's memorandum of September 27, 1991 (attached hereto) which outline the responsibilities of local school districts towards this population of students. Each district is **required** to have policies and procedures in place, that show how the school district will meet the needs of limited English proficient students. **The district must be able to demonstrate that the method of instruction utilized gives limited English proficient students a meaningful opportunity to participate in and benefit from educational programming at school**. This includes taking affirmative steps to enable students to overcome language barriers. Policies and procedures are required whether or not the school district currently has students needing these services.

In conjunction with the UVM Rural Education Center's Language and Cultural Affairs Program, the Department of Education will, in the summer of 1994, issue a handbook containing guidelines and resource information that should be helpful to you in developing appropriate procedures for educational services to LEP students. The handbook will also include a guide for writing a policy and procedures for your school district or supervisory union. In the meantime, and afterward, the Language and Cultural Affairs Program is available for technical assistance.

As a means of enforcement of students' civil rights with regard to national origin, race, color, and gender, I am appointing Karen Richards as the Civil Rights Enforcement Officer for the State Department of Education. In this role, Attorney Richards will investigate complaints and make recommendations concerning compliance issues.

Beginning April 1, 1994 and continuing indefinitely, the Department will be conducting surveys of each school district to make sure that policies and procedures are in place. This survey will be done by department personnel when they visit school districts. The survey will consist of checking to see whether districts have policies and procedures for Title VI, including LEP, Title IX, section 504, ADA, etc.. The survey will be used to gather information and focus technical assistance. No negative consequences will be attached to districts who are not in technical compliance. However, beginning three months from the date that the Handbook is made available to school districts, the department will begin monitoring for compliance with LEP and Title VI requirements. School districts that fail to comply with the mandate, at that time, will be subject to corrective action, including possible withholding of federal funds.

I hope you will take this opportunity to review and make necessary adjustments to your policies and procedures. As always, if we can be of assistance, please do not hesitate to contact the Department.

enc. Commissioner Mill's Memorandum dated May 7, 1991
OCR Memorandum dated September 27, 1991

State of Vermont
Department of Education

MEMORANDUM

TO: Superintendents of Schools
FROM: Richard P. Mills, Commissioner
DATE: May 7, 1991
SUBJ: The Education of Language Minority Students

As the diversity of Vermont's population increases questions have arisen about the responsibility of a school district with regard to the education of students enrolled in their public schools who are not proficient in English. This memorandum provides a general summary of the legal responsibilities of a school district whenever a student is enrolled who it not fully proficient in English.

Language minority students attending public schools must be given a meaningful opportunity to participate in and benefit from educational programming at school. Under federal and state law school districts are prohibited from discriminating against a student on the basis of national origin. Accordingly, a student may not be excluded from participation in, or be denied the benefits of, any school program or activity on the basis of the student's national origin. In addition, school districts must take affirmative steps to enable students to overcome language barriers in the classroom. The affirmative steps required include identification and assessment of non-English proficient (NEP) and limited English proficient (LEP) students as well as the provision of adequate language development programs.

1. **Identification**

All students who are from a non-English language background must be identified. Many school districts are currently using the Home Language Survey that is available through the Rural Education Center's Language and Cultural Affairs Program to identify these students.

2. **Assessment**

a) Each student from a non-English language background must be assessed with accurate instruments to determine the student's level of English proficiency. Best practices indicate that it is advisable to also conduct an assessment of the student's native language proficiency as well as content knowledge as this information will assist in determining the student's English proficiency as distinguished from other learning difficulties.
b) An individualized program and placement must be developed for the student in a specially designed language support program such as an English as a Second Language (ESL) instructional program. The instructional program must be based on sound second language pedagogy and sound educational practices for meeting the individual needs of NEP and LEP students.

3. **Appropriate Services**

a) An appropriate and adequate language support program must be provided to NEP and LEP students. Meaningful content area instruction must also be provided.
b) Educational personnel who are hired to teach language support programs to NEP and LEP students must be qualified to teach second language learners. Likewise, adequate training and professional support for these educators should be provided. (Note: At this time no specific license endorsement is required by state law in order to teach English as a Second Language. However, educational personnel should have some formal training in teaching second language learners to be considered qualified.)

4. **Monitoring**

a) Appropriate criteria must be developed and used to periodically assess a student's progress while receiving language and academic support services.
b) Procedures must be developed and used to formally determine when a student is no longer in need of language and academic support services.
c) Post service monitoring is required to ensure that the student is successfully transitioned into mainstream classes.
d) The efficacy of the academic and language support programs being used to educate NEP and LEP students must be evaluated periodically.

If the program developed for a NEP or LEP student as determined by periodic evaluation is not successful, then the program must be revised. The school's program must ensure that the student has a meaningful opportunity to benefit from educational programming to the same extent as fully proficient students including, but not limited to, providing the student with the opportunity to work toward a high school diploma. Likewise, language minority students should not be segregated. Also, the learning materials and facilities that are provided for their use must be appropriate to the needs of second language learners and must be as adequate as those provided to English proficient students. NEP and LEP students should be placed with their age appropriate peers to the extent that is possible.

Finally, if you have concerns about whether language minority students in a particular school district are being provided with a meaningful opportunity to participate in education as required by law, consider the following questions.

1) Has the school designed a program which is based on a sound educational theory?
2) Has the school pursued its program with adequate resources, personnel and practices?
3) Has the program achieved satisfactory results?

Castañeda v. Pickard, 648 F2d 989 (5th Circ. 1981)

The failure of a public school to take affirmative steps to overcome language barriers in the classroom constitutes discrimination. Discrimination, even if unintentional, is against the law. The occurrence of an unreasonable delay in student assessment or in the provision of language development programs is discriminatory. Likewise, the provision of an inadequate or insufficient program is discriminatory. Accordingly, it is advisable for a school district to have procedures in place for how to respond when a language minority student enrolls in school. The plan should identify those resources in the local region which may be available to assist school personnel in developing an appropriate program and placement for a NEP or LEP student.

For more information or technical assistance contact:

The Rural Education Center
Language and Cultural Affairs Program
500 Dorset Avenue
Burlington VT 05403
(802) 658-6342

Please reference the following materials for more information about laws pertaining to the education of language minority students.

Lau v. Nichols, 94 S.Ct. 786 (1974)
Castañeda v. Pickard, 648 F2d 989 (5th Circ. 1981)
The Equal Education Opportunities Act, 20 U.S.C. section 1703(f)
The Civil Rights Act of 1964, 42 U.S.C. section 2000(d),

continued...

The Bilingual Education Act, 20 U.S.C. section 3221, 34 C.F.R. part 100
Vermont Public Accommodations Law, 9 V.S.A. section 4502(a) (1987),
Vermont State Board of Education Manual of Rules and Procedures, Rule 1250

Pottinger, J. Stanley, Director, Office for Civil Rights

Department of Health and Welfare, "Memorandum to School Districts with More than Five Percent

National Origin Minority Group Children regarding Identification of Discrimination and Denial of Services on the Basis of National Origin," (May 25, 1970)

"Office for Civil Rights Title VI Language Minority Compliance Procedures" (December 3, 1985)

RESOURCES ON LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

ORGANIZATIONS

MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION, TRAINING AND ADVOCACY (META), INC.
240-A Elm Street, Suite 22
Somerville, MA 02144
Contact: Roger Rice, Esq.
TEL: (617) 628-2226

NATIONAL COALITION OF ADVOCATES FOR STUDENTS (NCAS)
100 Boylston Street, Suite 737
Boston, MA 02116-4610
TEL: (617) 357-8507

OFFICE FOR CIVIL RIGHTS (OCR), REGION I
U.S. Department of Education
J.W. McCormack Post Office and Courthouse
Room 222
Boston, MA 02109-4557
Contact: Robert Pierce
TEL: (617) 223-9662

VERMONT DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Commissioner's Office
120 State Street
Montpelier, VT 05620
Contact: Karen Richards
TEL: (802) 828-3135

VERMONT HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION
133 State Street
Montpelier, VT 05633-6301
TEL: (802) 828-2480

VERMONT SCHOOL BOARDS ASSOCIATION
2 Prospect St
Montpelier, VT 05602
TEL: (802) 223-3580

LEGAL REFERENCES

Castañeda v. Pickard, 648 F.2d 989 (5th Cir. 1981).

Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title VI, section 601, 42 U.S.C.A. section 2000d.

Diana v. State Board of Education (1973)

Elementary and Secondary Education Act, Title VII, Bilingual Education Act of 1968, 20 U.S.C. section 3221 et seq. (Supp. 1984).

Elementary and Secondary Education Act, Title VII, Federal Chapter 1; Compensatory Education Program, 20 U.S.C. 2701 et seq.

Elementary and Secondary Education Act, Title VII, Federal Chapter 1; Programs for Migratory Children, 20 U.S.C. 2781-2783.

Equal Educational Opportunities Act of 1974 (EEOA), 20 U.S.C. section 1703(f) (Supp. 1984).

Gomez v. Illinois State Board of Education (1987)

Idaho Migrant Council v. Board of Education (1981)

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) (1991), 20 U.S.C. 1401 et seq.

Jose P. v. Ambach, 3 EHLR 551 (E.D.N.Y 1979)

Keyes v. School District No. 1, 576 F. Supp. 1503 (D.Colo. 1983)

Larry P. v. Riles, 793 F.2d 969 (9th Cir. 1986)

Lau v. Nichols, 414 U.S. 563 (1974).

"May 25th Memorandum"; 35 Fed Register 11595 (1970)

U.S. Constitution, Fourteenth Amendment Equal Protection Clause (1868)

Vermont Public Accommodations Act, 9 V.S.A. Section 4502

Vermont State Board Manual of Rules and Practices; Vermont State Regulations on Special Education, section 2360.1

Vocational Rehabilitation Act of 1973, §504, 29 U.S.C.A., §794; P.L. 93-112.

OCR POLICY

U.S. Department of Education. (n.d.). *Fact Sheet--OCR Policy Update on Schools' Obligations Toward National Origin Minority Students with Limited English Proficiency*. Washington, DC: Office for Civil Rights.

U.S. Department of Education. (1991). *Policy Update on the Schools' Obligations Toward National Origin Minority Students with Limited English Proficiency*. Washington, DC: Office for Civil Rights.

U.S. Department of Education. (1985). *The Office for Civil Rights' Title VI Language Minority Compliance Procedures*. Washington, DC: Office for Civil Rights.

U.S. Department of Education. (1992). *The Provision of an Equal Education Opportunity to Limited English Proficient Students*. Washington, DC: Office for Civil Rights.

U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare. (1970). *Office for Civil Rights May 1970 Memorandum*. Washington, DC: Author.

REFERENCE MATERIALS

Ambert, A. & Dew, N. (1982). *Special Education for Exceptional Bilingual Students*. Milwaukee, WI: Midwest National Origin Desegregation Assistance Center.

Carrera, J.W. (1992). Immigrant Students: *Immigrant Students: Their Legal Right of Access to Public Schools - A Guide for Advocates and Educators*. Boston, MA: National Coalition of Advocates for Students.

Kretschmer, R.E. (1991). *Exceptionality and the Limited English Proficient Student: Historical and Practical Contexts*. In E.V. Hamayan & J.S. Damico (Eds.). Limiting Bias in the Assessment of Bilingual Students (pp. 1-38). Austin, TX: PRO-ED.

Lyons, J.J. (1988). *Legal Responsibilities of Education Agencies Serving National Origin Language Minority Students*. Washington, DC: Mid-Atlantic Equity Center.

Maine Department of Educational & Cultural Services (1982). *School and Community Handbook: Educational Rights, Services and Privileges for Ethnic Groups and People of Limited English Proficiency.* Augusta, ME: Author.

Multicultural Education and Advocacy, Inc. (META). (1991a). *A Handbook for Immigrant Parents: Protect the Educational Rights of Your Children.* San Francisco, CA: Author.

Multicultural Education and Advocacy, Inc. (META). (1991b). *The Rights of Limited English Proficient Students: A Handbook for Parents and Community Advocates.* San Francisco, CA: Author.

National Coalition of Advocates for Students. (1993). *Achieving the Dream: How Communities and Schools Can Improve Education for Immigrant Students.* Boston, MA: Author.

National Coalition of Advocates for Students. (1991). *Barriers to Excellence.* Boston, MA: Author.

National Coalition of Advocates for Students. (1991). *New Voices: Immigrant Students in U.S. Public Schools.* Boston, MA: Author.

National Committee for Citizens in Education. (1991). *Rights of Students with Limited English Proficiency.* Washington, DC: Author.

Parker, R.C. (1993). *Designing An Educational Program For Low-Incidence Numbers of Limited English Proficient Students.* Providence, RI: New England Multifunctional Resource Center.

U.S. Department of Education. (1994). *Annual Report to Congress: Fiscal Year 1992.* Washington, DC: GPO.

U.S. Department of Education (n.d.). *Fact Sheet--OCR Policy Update on Schools' Obligations Toward National Origin Minority Students with Limited English Proficiency.* Washington, DC: Office for Civil Rights.

U.S. Department of Education. (1991). *Policy Update on the Schools' Obligations Toward National Origin Minority Students with Limited English Proficiency.* Washington, DC: Office for Civil Rights.

U.S. Department of Education. (1985). *The Office for Civil Rights' Title VI Language Minority Compliance Procedures. Washington, DC:* Office for Civil Rights.

U.S. Department of Education. (1992). *The Provision of an Equal Education Opportunity to Limited English Proficient Students.* Washington, DC: Office for Civil Rights.

U.S. Department of Education. (1980). *"Title VI Civil Rights Act of 1964."* Federal Register, Vol. 45, 92. Washington, DC: GPO.

U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare. (1970). *Office for Civil Rights May 1970 Memorandum.* Washington, DC: Author.

SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION AND CULTURAL DIVERSITY

INTRODUCTION

Imagine that one day you are suddenly forced to leave your homeland. There is no time to put your things in order and say good-bye to all your family and friends. You find yourself fleeing to a strange land where people communicate in a language you don't understand or speak. Instead of returning every day to your family and home to eat and sleep, you are now temporarily staying in a transit camp awaiting permission to enter a new country. You know that you may never return permanently to your country.

What might you be thinking and feeling? How would you survive? Who would be there to help you? How long would it take to learn to speak, read and write this new language? Would you be able to go to college if you wanted to? How would you feel if people's values, beliefs, attitudes and nonverbal communication in this new culture were totally different from your own? How long would it take you to adjust? How would you feel if the holidays you know are not celebrated? How would you feel about adapting or assimilating to this new culture?

Obviously, people come to the U.S. for a multitude of different reasons. For some the move may be a desirable event, but for almost everyone it will also involve painful, lonely and difficult moments. Many things that one has taken for granted until now are gone. This is just as true for children and young people as it is for adults.

In order to create quality educational opportunities for students, teachers and other school personnel need to honestly assess their perceptions and attitudes about the experiences of learning another language and adapting to a new culture: How much of what I "know" about second language acquisition and culture is based on myth or misconception? How much have I learned from personal experience? Am I open to becoming a learner instead of assuming that I already know enough about this subject?

SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION

Second language acquisition is a topic where a lot of us tend to rely more on "common sense notions" than on actual experience or knowledge. There is, however, considerable research by linguists and language specialists which contradicts many commonly-held assumptions about how people learn a second language.

Skilled educators working with second language learners from diverse cultures pay attention to the research and writings of prominent scholars in the field of second language education, linguistics and multicultural education. Accurate information from reliable sources combined with classroom-based research should form the basis for intelligent educational programs that are responsive to the unique needs of ESL learners.

One of the most essential concepts in understanding second language learners is that there are ***different aspects of language proficiency***. These two aspects were formally defined as ***Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills (BICS)*** and ***Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP)*** for the sake of simplicity by Canadian second language researcher Jim Cummins (1981).

BICS are often referred to as *conversational English*, i.e., the surface language we use to communicate in everyday real-life situations which are not cognitively demanding. Native speakers use conversational English to talk informally with teachers, other adults, and classmates in the school setting. Although there are individual differences, research shows that second language learners frequently develop native-like *conversational skills* within two years. This kind of language proficiency is not to be confused with Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP).

CALP is also referred to as *academic English*. Academic English is the proficiency required by students to read, write and learn in the content ares (e.g., science, social studies, etc.) at an appropriate grade level. This aspect of language proficiency is much more critical to a student's academic success and takes as long as five to seven years to develop (Cummins, 1981; Collier, 1988). Educators sometimes mistakenly assume that students with fluent *conversational English* no longer require language instruction.

Of course, it is difficult to know *exactly* how long the process of acquiring academic English will take for an individual student. Numerous variables affect the length of time required to acquire a second language and the approaches and methods most effective in teaching the student. Some of the variables are: social and cultural factors, previous educational background, age, oral and literacy skills in the primary/home language, and parental attitudes and experiences.

For many schools/districts, the primary concern is to teach ESL students to communicate in English as quickly as possible. While this may be a matter of necessity, it is important to consider the research and have realistic expectations about how long it will take to acquire *academic English*. Second language learning is a complicated process *which takes time*. Because it can take more than five years to reach a level of academic proficiency in English comparable to their native-English-speaking peers, schools must therefore be prepared to make a long-term commitment to supporting the academic development of ESL students (Cummins, 1994).

For more information on the second language acquisition process, see the ERIC Digest article, *"Myths and Misconceptions About Second Language Learning"*, Appendix B, p. 22.

A list of materials and resources for learning more about the second language acquisition is also provided in Appendix B, p. 27.

INTERRELATIONSHIP OF LANGUAGE & CULTURE

In our efforts to teach students English, we also cannot ignore the value of their primary/home language and culture. A few paragraphs in the New Mexico State Department of Education's technical assistance manual, *"Recommended Procedures for Language Assessment" (1989)*, express this relationship between language and culture very eloquently. New Mexico has a large multilingual/multicultural population and much can be learned from their experience in this area of education.

> "The schools in the state are always searching for ways and means to incorporate methods and materials which can facilitate the acquisition of English for speakers of other languages.
>
> As educators, however, we must recognize that *language and culture are inseparable.* They both contribute not just to the development of personality, but also to the manner in which the individual, and indeed a given society, interprets reality.
>
> *Language is the most overt expression of culture, and most of the learning process, both in school and in the home, is carried out through language.* The child must relate and accommodate what has been learned in the home to the language and culture of the school. For the child whose language and culture matches that of the school, this can be, in itself, a challenge. *For students whose linguistic and cultural fabric are different from that represented in the school, the task is monumental.* When we recognize that our success in life depends to a high degree on our educational experiences, we realize that we must use the home language and culture of the child as tools for cognitive development in the curriculum so as not to deprive these populations of full participation in the educational process."

Whether or not we, as individuals or institutions in the state of Vermont, personally believe in or support bilingualism or cultural diversity, we cannot deny the reality that language and culture are intertwined. Effective educational programs recognize the language(s) and culture(s) of *all students* in their schools and incorporate them into the curriculum. Validating students' backgrounds supports their linguistic and cultural identity and heritage. In our increasingly diverse schools, educators need to prepare students to participate in a society that represents all multicultural groups fairly.

VERMONT'S LINGUISTIC AND CULTURAL DIVERSITY

The state of Vermont has never been as culturally homogeneous or monolingual English-speaking a place as it has been portrayed. Before Europeans began moving into the area that is now Vermont, the land was inhabited by the Abenaki people, who had their own flourishing language and culture. Elise Guyette's book, *"Vermont: A Cultural Patchwork"* (1986) and the Vermont Folklife Center's *"Many Cultures, One People: A Multicultural Handbook about Vermont for Teachers" (1992)*, edited by Gregory Sharrow, provide interesting history and biographical stories of the lives of the Abenakis and the various linguistic and cultural groups that have migrated to Vermont and formed communities over the last few hundred

years. In recent years, the state has experienced immigration of peoples from other parts of the world including Southeast Asia, Eastern Europe, Russia and Tibet.

Results from home language surveys show that there are more than 50 languages and dialects spoken in Vermont homes today. The French-Canadians have been the largest *linguistic* minority in recent history. The population of Vietnamese speakers has grown large enough in the Burlington area in recent years that the city now has a public access television program broadcast in their language.

MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION

Even districts with small populations of linguistically or culturally diverse students can support multiculturalism in education. If Vermont students are to meet National Education Goals, schools need to emphasize the importance of becoming competent in more than one language and learning about the diverse cultural heritage of this nation.

In February 1993, the Northeast Consortium for Multicultural Education sponsored a regional conference for educators. Participants at the conference met to develop a working definition of multicultural education. The following definition emerged:

> "Education that is multicultural is a dynamic and life-long process of teaching and learning that fosters critical thinking, cultural awareness, language proficiency, cooperation, self-esteem, community concern, and transformative social action. Advocates for multicultural education work to promote social justice, educational equity, and excellence."

This means more than organizing an annual ethnic festival or an isolated multicultural education course. Multicultural education involves staff development, improving overall school climate and classroom learning environment, curriculum reform, promoting unbiased assessment practices, purchasing culturally appropriate instructional materials, and involving parents and community members from diverse backgrounds in school programs.

Learning specifically about the language and cultural background of your student(s) is a good way to get started in making your teaching more multicultural. You must become something of an amateur linguist and cultural ethnographer. Even without bilingual programs, teachers can learn strategies to promote students' development in their primary languages. By incorporating the students' language and cultural backgrounds, the learning environment becomes more real to them. Teachers can more effectively tap into ESL students' prior knowledge and experiences.

A list of resources for those who want to learn more about their students' language and cultural backgrounds and multicultural education can be found in Appendix B, p. 29. In addition, Appendix H, p. 168, lists resources for understanding stages of cultural adjustment, cultural awareness and counseling concerns for ESL students.

FAMILY & COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

One of the best ways for schools to become familiar with their students' language, cultural and experiential backgrounds is through family and community involvement in the educational process. However, language and cross-cultural barriers must be overcome if this is to happen.

Schools should begin involving parents in their child's education upon enrollment. A formal interview with the family provides an opportune time to provide them with a general orientation. Learning a new language and living in an unfamiliar culture can be very demanding and stressful for people. A school's efforts to ease this transition ultimately benefits the student. Often the school is a vital link to the community for refugee and immigrant families.

Information which is especially important to share with parent/guardian(s) of ESL students during the formal interview includes:

- legal rights of ESL children and parents, i.e., the right to equal educational opportunities and an alternative instructional program, including English language development and academic instruction;
- names and phone numbers of relevant school staff;
- district or school ESL policy and procedures;
- alternative language, content and social/cultural support services available;
- general district and school policies, rules & regulations, curriculum, academic requirements, teachers and principal, grievance procedures articulated in written materials, translated versions preferably;
- ESL and Adult Education Opportunities for parents.

For additional suggestions on how to involve parents and the communities of ESL students, see Robert Parker's *Parental and Home Language Community Involvement Plan* Appendix B, p. 26.

There are many resources in and outside Vermont which can help schools to learn about the language, cultural and experiential backgrounds families and communities, as well as ways to work effectively with them. For a list of resources for family and community involvement, see Appendix B, p. 32.

Myths and Misconceptions About Second Language Learning

ERIC CLEARINGHOUSE ON LANGUAGES AND LINGUISTICS
CENTER FOR APPLIED LINGUISTICS DIGEST December 1992

Myths and Misconceptions About Second Language Learning
National Center for Research on Cultural Diversity and Second Language Learning

This digest is based on a report published by the National Center for Research on Cultural Diversity and Second Language Learning, University of California, Santa Cruz; Myths and Misconceptions About Second Language Learning: What Every Teacher Needs to Unlearn, by Barry McLaughlin. Copies of the full report are available for $4.00 from Center for Applied Linguistics, NCRCDSLL, 1118 22nd St. NW, Washington, DC 20037.

As the school-aged population changes, teachers all over the country are challenged with instructing more children with limited English skills. Thus, all teachers need to know something about how children learn a second language (L2). Intuitive assumptions are often mistaken, and children can be harmed if teachers have unrealistic expectations of the process of L2 learning and its relationship to the acquisition of other academic skills and knowledge.

As any adult who has tried to learn another language can verify, second language learning can be a frustrating experience. This is no less the case for children, although there is a widespread belief that children are facile second language learners. This digest discusses commonly held myths and misconceptions about children and second language learning and the implications for classroom teachers.

Myth 1: Children learn second languages quickly and easily.

Typically, people who assert the superiority of child learners claim that children's brains are more flexible (e.g., Lenneberg, 1967). Current research challenges this biological imperative, arguing that different rates of L2 acquisition may reflect psychological and social factors that favor child learners (Newport, 1990). Research comparing children to adults has consistently demonstrated that adolescents and adults perform better than young children under controlled conditions (e.g., Snow & Hoefnagel-Hoehle, 1978). One exception is pronunciation, although even here some studies show better results for older learners.

Nonetheless, people continue to believe that children learn languages faster than adults. Is this superiority illusory? Let us consider the criteria of language proficiency for a child and an adult. A child does not have to learn as much as an adult to achieve communicative competence. A child's constructions are shorter and simpler, and vocabulary is smaller. Hence, although it appears that the child learns more quickly than the adult, research results typically indicate that adult and adolescent learners perform better.

Teachers should not expect miraculous results from children learning English as a second language (ESL) in the classroom. At the very least, they should anticipate that learning a second language is as difficult for a child as it is for an adult. It may be even more difficult, since young children do not have access to the memory techniques and other strategies that more experienced learners use in acquiring vocabulary and in learning grammatical rules.

Nor should it be assumed that children have fewer inhibitions than adults when they make mistakes in an L2. Children are more likely to be shy and embarrassed around peers than are adults. Children from some cultural backgrounds are extremely anxious when singled out to perform in a language they are in the process of learning. Teachers should not assume that, because children supposedly learn second languages quickly, such discomfort will readily pass.

Myth 2: The younger the child, the more skilled in acquiring an L2.

Some researchers argue that the earlier children begin to learn a second language, the better (e.g., Krashen, Long, & Scarcella, 1979). However, research does not support this conclusion in school settings. For example, a study of British children learning French in a school context concluded that, after 5 years of exposure, older children were better L2 learners (Stern, Burstall, & Harley, 1975). Similar results have been found in other European

studies (e.g., Florander & Jansen, 1968).

These findings may reflect the mode of language instruction used in Europe, where emphasis has traditionally been placed on formal grammatical analysis. Older children are more skilled in dealing with this approach and hence might do better. However, this argument does not explain findings from studies of French immersion programs in Canada, where little emphasis is placed on the formal aspects of grammar. On tests of French language proficiency, Canadian English-speaking children in late immersion programs (where the L2 is introduced in Grade 7 or 8) have performed as well or better than children who began immersion in kindergarten or Grade 1 (Genesee, 1987).

Pronunciation is one area where the younger-is-better assumption may have validity. Research (e.g., Oyama, 1976) has found that the earlier a learner begins a second language, the more native-like the accent he or she develops.

The research cited above does not suggest, however, that early exposure to an L2 is detrimental. An early start for foreign language learners, for example, makes a long sequence of instruction leading to potential communicative proficiency possible and enables children to view second language learning and related cultural insights as normal and integral. Nonetheless, ESL instruction in the United States is different from foreign language instruction. Language minority children in U.S. schools need to master English as quickly as possible while learning subject-matter content. This suggests that early exposure to English is called for. However, because L2 acquisition takes time, children continue to need the support of their first language, where this is possible, to avoid falling behind in content area learning. Teachers should have realistic expectations of their ESL learners. Research suggests that older students will show quicker gains, though younger children may have an advantage in pronunciation. Certainly, beginning language instruction in Grade 1 gives children more exposure to the language than beginning in Grade 6, but exposure in itself does not predict language acquisition.

Myth 3: the more time students spend in a second language context, the quicker they learn the language.

Many educators believe children from non-English-speaking backgrounds will learn English best through structured immersion, where they have ESL classes and content-based instruction in English. These programs provide more time on task in English than bilingual classes.

Research, however, indicates that this increased exposure to English does not necessarily speed the acquisition of English. Over the length of the program, children in bilingual classes, with exposure to the home language and to English, acquire English language skills equivalent to those acquired by children who have been in English-only programs (Cummins, 1981; Ramirez, Yuen, & Ramey, 1991). This would not be expected if time on task were the most important factor in language learning.

Researchers also caution against withdrawing home language support too soon and suggest that although oral communication skills in a second language may be acquired within 2 or 3 years, it may take 4 to 6 years to acquire the level of proficiency needed for understanding the language in its academic uses (Collier, 1989; Cummins, 1981).

Teachers should be aware that giving language minority children support in the home language is beneficial. The use of the home language in bilingual classrooms enables children to maintain grade-level school work, reinforces the bond between the home and the school, and allows them to participate more effectively in school activities. Furthermore, if the children acquire literacy skills in the first language, as adults they may be functionally bilingual, with an advantage in technical or professional careers.

Myth 4: Children have acquired an L2 once they can speak it.

Some teachers assume that children who can converse comfortably in English are in full control of the language. Yet for school-aged children, proficiency in face-to-face communication does not imply proficiency in the more complex academic language needed to engage in many classroom activities. Cummins (1980) cites evidence from a study of 1,210 immigrant children in Canada who required much longer (approximately 5 to 7 years) to master the disembedded cognitive language required for the regular English curriculum than to master oral communicative skills.

Educators need to be cautious in exiting children from programs where they have the support of their home language. If children who are not ready for the all-English classroom are mainstreamed, their academic success may be hindered. Teachers

should realize that mainstreaming children on the basis of oral language assessment is inappropriate.

All teachers need to be aware that children who are learning in a second language may have language problems in reading and writing that are not apparent if their oral abilities are used to gauge their English proficiency. These problems in academic reading and writing at the middle and high school levels may stem from limitations in vocabulary and syntactic knowledge. Even children who are skilled orally can have such gaps.

Myth 5: All children learn an L2 in the same way.

Most teachers would probably not admit that they think all children learn an L2 in the same way or at the same rate. Yet, this assumption seems to underlie a great deal of practice. Cultural anthropologists have shown that mainstream U.S. families and families from minority cultural backgrounds have different ways of talking (Heath, 1983). Mainstream children are accustomed to a deductive, analytic style of talking, whereas many culturally diverse children are accustomed to an inductive style. U.S. schools emphasize language functions and styles that predominate in mainstream families. Language is used to communicate meaning, convey information, control social behavior, and solve problems, and children are regarded for clear and logical thinking. Children who use language in a different manner often experience frustration.

Social class also influences learning styles. In urban, literate, and technologically advanced societies, middle-class parents teach their children through language. Traditionally, most teaching in less technologically advanced, non-urbanized cultures is carried out nonverbally, through observation, supervised participation, and self-initiated repetition (Rogoff, 1990). There is none of the information testing through questions that characterized the teaching-learning process in urban and suburban middle-class homes.

In addition, some children are more accustomed to learning from peers than from adults. Cared for and taught by older siblings or cousins, they learn to be quiet in the presence of adults and have little interaction with them. In school, they are likely to pay more attention to what their peers are doing than to what the teacher is saying.

Individual children also react to school and learn differently within groups. Some children are outgoing and sociable and learn the second language quickly. They do not worry about mistakes, but use limited resources to generate input from native speakers. Other children are shy and quiet. They learn by listening and watching. They say little, for fear of making a mistake. Nonetheless, research shows that both types of learners can be successful second language learners.

In a school environment, behaviors such as paying attention and persisting at tasks are valued. Because of cultural differences, some children may find the interpersonal setting of the school culture difficult. If the teacher is unaware of such cultural differences, their expectations and interactions with these children may be influenced.

Effective instruction for children from culturally diverse backgrounds requires varied instructional activities that consider the backgrounds requires varied instructional activities that consider the children's diversity of experience. Many important educational innovations in current practice have resulted from teachers adapting instruction for children from culturally diverse backgrounds. Teachers need to recognize that experiences in the home and home culture affect children's values, patterns of language use, and interpersonal style. Children are likely to be more responsive to a teacher who affirms the values of the home culture.

Conclusion

Research on second language learning has shown that many misconceptions exist about how children learn languages. Teachers need to be aware of these misconceptions and realize that quick and easy solutions are not appropriate for complex problems. Second language learning by school-aged children takes longer, is harder,and involves more effort than many teachers realize.

We should focus on the opportunity that cultural and linguistic diversity provides. Diverse children enrich our schools and our understanding of education in general. In fact, although the research of the National Center for Research on Cultural Diversity and Second Language Learning has been directed at children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, much of it applies equally well to mainstream students.

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PARENTAL AND HOME LANGUAGE COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT PLAN

The following suggestions can be articulated to create a plan for involving parents of ESL students in the education of their children.

1. Use the home language with parents whenever possible. (Community resources will have to be accessed if there are no adults in the district who speak the parents' home language.)

2. Conduct a formal interview with each family at registration. Prepare a list of relevant questions about the student's learning styles and achievement. Also, include information about how the parent can assist their child in adjusting to the complexities of adjusting to his new school and language. You may need a translator to assist you.

3. Notices, reports about student progress and recommendations need to be in the home language.

4. It is very helpful when districts, in collaboration with community organizations, provide training and support for parents in how to access American schools, as well as what is taught in ESL and the contents. You might want to provide information on how to assist students at home during such activities.

5. Many districts support home language mentoring and tutoring programs for students and families in collaboration with community organizations serving the ESL population.

6. Establishing a working relationship with local health and service agencies helps schools help parents in accessing the services of these organizations. These organizations are often an excellent resource for better understanding the needs of ESL families.

7. Establishing a working relationship with home language community organizations makes many of these activities function more smoothly.

8. Many districts appoint a community/family liaison who knows the language and culture of the target language group(s).

Adapted from "Designing An Educational Program for Low-Incidence Numbers of Limited English Proficient Students" (p. 59) Robert C. Parker (1993).

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RESOURCES FOR MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION

ORGANIZATIONS

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University of Vermont
229 Waterman Building
Burlington, VT 05405-0160

Contact: David Conrad
Contact: David Shiman
TEL: (802) 656-2030

CULTURAL DIVERSITY & CURRICULUM PROGRAM
College of Education
University of Massachusetts
Amherst, MA 01003

Contact: Sonia Nieto
TEL: (413) 545-1551

GREEN MOUNTAIN RETURNED PEACE CORPS VOLUNTEERS
Speakers Bureau
RD #1, Box 660
Bristol, VT 05443

Contact: Mary Gemignani
TEL: (802) 453-3992

INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY FOR INTERCULTURAL EDUCATION, TRAINING & RESEARCH
International Secretariat (Professional Membership Association)
Suite 200
808 Seventeenth St., NW
Washington, DC 20006

Contact: David Fantini
TEL: (202) 466-7883

NEW ENGLAND DESEGREGATION ASSISTANCE CENTER
144 Wayland Avenue
Providence, RI 02906

TEL: (401) 351-7577

PEACE & JUSTICE CENTER
Racial Justice & Equity Project
21 Church St.
Burlington, VT 05401

Contact: John Tucker
TEL: (802) 864-0659

REACH CENTER FOR MULTICULTURAL AND GLOBAL EDUCATION
180 Nickerson St., Suite 212
Seattle, WA 98109

TEL: (206) 284-8584

SOUTHEAST ASIAN REFUGEE STUDIES PROJECT (SARS)
CURA
University of Minnesota
330 Hubert Humphrey Center
301 19th Avenue South
Minneapolis, MN 55455

TEL: (612) 625-5535

SOUTHERN POVERTY LAW CENTER
Teaching Tolerance Magazine
400 Washington Ave.
Montgomery, AL 36104

THE NORTHEAST CONSORTIUM FOR MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION (NECME)
Equity Assistance Center, Region B
New York University
32 Washington Place
Suite 72
New York, New York 10003

Contact: Donna Elam
TEL: (212) 998-5100

THE VERMONT FOLKLIFE CENTER
The Gamaliel Painter House
P.O. Box 442
Middlebury, VT 05753

TEL: (802) 388-4964

WORLD OF DIFFERENCE INSTITUTE
Anti-Defamation League
823 United Nations Plaza
New York, New York 10017

TEL: (212) 490-2525

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RESOURCES FOR FAMILY/COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

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University of California at Santa Cruz
141 Kerr Hall
Santa Cruz, CA 95064
TEL: (408) 459-3500

NATIONAL COALITION OF ADVOCATES FOR STUDENTS
Clearinghouse for Immigrant Education (CHIME)
100 Boylston St., Suite 737
Boston, MA 02116
TEL: 1-800-441-7192

NATIONAL MULTICULTURAL INSTITUTE (NMCI)
3000 Connecticut Avenue, N.W., Suite 438
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29 Ethan Allen Avenue
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Essex Junction, VT 05452

Contact: Loc Nguyen
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Burlington, VT 05401

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FLETCHER FREE LIBRARY
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Burlington, VT 05401

Contact: Amber Collins
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Center for Cultural Pluralism
Blundell House
University of Vermont
Burlington, VT 05401

Contact: Tony Chavez
TEL: (802) 656-3819

PEACE & JUSTICE CENTER
21 Church Street
Burlington, VT 05401

Contact: Ellen Kahler
TEL: (802) 863-2345

SARA M. HOLBROOK COMMUNITY CENTER
66 North Avenue
Burlington, VT 05401

Contact: Susan Janco
TEL: (802) 862-0080

THE COUNCIL ON REFUGEES AND IMMIGRANTS (CRI)
Community and Economic Development Office
Burlington City Hall
Burlington, VT 05401

Contact: Anne Weiss
TEL: (802) 865-7184

VERMONT PARENT INFORMATION CENTER (VPIC)
Chase Mill
1 Mill St./A7
Burlington, VT 05401

Contact: Connie Curtin
TEL: (802) 658-5315
TEL: 1-800-639-7170

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PROGRAM PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

Commissioners Memo

Vermont Commissioner of Education Richard P. Mills (1994) states, "Each district is required (under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964) to have policies and procedures in place, that show how the school district will meet the needs of limited English proficient students. The district must be able to demonstrate that the method of instruction utilized gives limited English proficient students a meaningful opportunity to participate in and benefit from educational programming at school. This includes taking affirmative steps to enable students to overcome language barriers. Policies and procedures are required whether or not the school district currently has students needing these services."

Nationwide, the most effective programs for the education of ESL students have the support of district-level administrators. This support enables district personnel to address the need for educational policy and systematic procedures, qualified staff, instructional materials, coordination of programs, staff training and technical assistance. The administration should seek input from school personnel, students, parents, and community members in the efforts to develop high quality services for ESL students.

ESL Coordination Team(s)

Depending on how many schools in the district have ESL enrollments, the Language and Cultural Affairs Program (LCAP) recommends that districts organize either a system-wide team and/or school-based team(s) for planning of legally required services. Although the team(s) will carry out a number of important tasks related to programmatic decision-making, their first priority should be to develop a written policy and procedures for serving ESL students in the district.

Ideally, system-wide and/or school-based teams will include teachers, administrators, and other school staff who work directly with ESL students in the district's schools. In forming a team(s), districts might first survey their staff to identify persons with previous experience, training and a commitment to this population of students.

In districts with ESL Program Coordinators, one of their responsibilities would be to oversee the team(s) involved in the development of a policy and procedures. The coordinator also consults with and informs the Superintendent of programmatic issues and decisions.

Other general functions of the district ESL Coordination Team are:

- to oversee the implementation of the district's policy and procedures for serving ESL students and revise as needed;
- to support the collaboration and training of ESL teachers and mainstream school staff;
- to periodically evaluate the district program services for ESL students and revise, as needed.

Adapted from Parker, R.C. (1993). Roles and Responsibilities of the System-wide ESL Coordination Team. *A Program Process Guide* (pp. 77-80). Providence, RI: New England MRC.

First Steps

Some districts in the state with larger numbers of ESL students may have already developed a policy and procedures. In such districts, the system-wide or school-based team(s) should review these carefully to make sure that they meet federal and state law and policy guidelines.

Districts that do not yet have a policy and procedures for serving ESL students in their districts or simply want to enhance the quality of their program, may choose to seek technical assistance and training prior to writing a policy and procedures. See Resources for Language Development Programs, Appendix H, p. 160.

Team members will benefit from reserving time to become better informed about issues regarding the education of ESL students in public schools. They need to understand second language acquisition, acculturation, educational issues of ESL students, and legal and program responsibilities. This is all important background information for writing policy and procedures. Although an initial study period will take time, the payoff will come in having well thought-out, comprehensive services.

Another recommendation during this programmatic decision-making stage is for the team to conduct a district needs assessment and an inventory of current resources for serving ESL students. The first task would be to determine the number of schools involved; the language and cultural groups represented; literacy levels; prior experience of teachers and school personnel in working with ESL students. This enables the team to identify areas of program need--e.g., qualified staff, training, instructional and curricular materials, funding, assessment materials, cultural background information, etc.--in terms of language development, content area instruction, acculturation and counseling services, vocational, health/special needs, and adjunct services.

For background information that would help in conducting the needs assessment and inventory, see *TESOL's Standards for Ensuring Access To Quality Educational Experiences for Language Minority Students,* Appendix C, p. 42 and *TESOL Statements on the Education of K-12 Language Minority Students & Preparation of Primary and Secondary Teachers in the United States,* Appendix C, p. 44. These standards serve as a tool for districts to use in planning programs for ESL students in public schools in the U.S. A question format helps districts to judge how well they provide ESL students with access to: a positive learning environment; appropriate curriculum; full delivery of services; and equitable assessment.

Development of a Policy and Procedures

Ideally, the information gathered from the needs assessment/inventory will be used to develop a *written policy and procedures for serving ESL students* in the district. Written policies and procedures serve as a blueprint for a quality program. They describe the district's approach, how it will meet requirements for legal compliance, and how the program will be implemented and coordinated at the school level. The person(s) responsible for program coordination, supervision and evaluation of relevant school staff serving ESL students should be designated. The procedures also delineate roles and responsibilities for people carrying out various tasks.

*The **written policy** should briefly summarize the district's goals and procedures in the following areas:*

- ***program rationale***--description of current needs & specific goals for helping ESL students gain access to quality educational experiences;
- ***procedures to identify and screen*** students with limited English proficiency;
- ***ways it will communicate with and involve parents*** who may need special accommodations due to language and cultural differences;
- ***initial assessment*** of English language proficiency, native language proficiency, and academic skills for purposes of classification and instructional placement;
- ***instructional placement procedures*** for students needing language assistance and academic support programs;

- ***provision of "appropriate services" including an alternative language program, content area instruction, acculturation and counseling services, vocational instruction (if desired), health/special needs, and adjunct support services***--description of program design, teacher qualifications, instructional approaches, curriculum, time allotment, materials, classroom space, resources, record keeping;

- ***multiple criteria for monitoring of English language development while in program and for exit*** from language assistance and academic support program;

- ***monitoring of academic performance*** after exit from program;

- ***evaluation of the district's program for ESL students***.

For guides to use in writing a district ESL Policy and Procedures, see Chapter 4. Additional materials for development of policies and procedures can be found in Robert Parker's *A Program Process Guide*--Part 2 of the Training Module: *Developing Appropriate Educational Programs for Low-Incidence Numbers of LEP Students* (1993).

Implementation of Policy and Procedures at School Level

Once a district has worked out a policy and procedures, the next step is to find a satisfactory way to implement them in the schools. Because providing an effective program for ESL students is a *collective responsibility*, the LCAP recommends **school-based ESL Coordination Teams** be formed to carry out specific tasks outlined in the written policy and to make decisions about services for individual ESL students.

The team approach aims to prevent any single person from being overburdened. It uses the varied talents and experiences of staff, parents or community members. The ultimate goal of the team is to help ESL students integrate successfully into the social and academic activities of the school. Therefore, the teams should represent the whole range of school personnel involved in the education of ESL students.

A typical team might include: a classroom or content area teacher(s); an ESL teacher; a building administrator; a guidance counselor; and other specialists, as appropriate. In addition, the team could involve parents, agency staff and community members (with knowledge of students' specific languages, cultures, and experiential backgrounds) on an ad hoc basis. Ideally, team members value the linguistic/cultural backgrounds that their students bring and want to incorporate these into the social and academic life of their schools. Those people who have experienced learning another language and adjusting to a new culture may bring valuable insights to the team.

School-based ESL Coordination Teams should meet at least quarterly to make decisions about services for ESL students.[1] Teachers and other school staff may feel overburdened with meetings, but most also realize that team planning can be more efficient in the long run. Many schools already have established teams, which meet regularly to discuss students' progress and make decisions about programming for individual students.

Districts with smaller numbers of ESL students may prefer to delegate responsibility for planning and decision-making about ESL students' programs to existing teams. This will work if members are willing to get relevant training and take on this additional responsibility. Districts with larger numbers of ESL students may prefer to form separate on-site ESL Coordination Teams which focus only on ESL services.

Whichever approach is taken, communication and coordination between the ESL teacher(s) and others directly involved with ESL students in the school is vital. On-site teams provide an opportunity for them to share language and content objectives, teaching and assessment strategies, instructional resources, student observations, and communication with families. When there is little or no communication between ESL teachers and other school personnel, ESL student programs become fragmented and isolated (Parker, 1993). All team members share responsibility for seeing that district ESL policy and procedures are implemented consistently in their school.

The entire school community of administrative, teaching, and support staff can play a role in empowering ESL students to acquire English language skills and adapt to the culture.

Monitoring of District Policies and Procedures

Although Vermont's Education Goals do not explicitly address the needs of ESL students, they do state that "*every* child becomes a competent, caring, productive, responsible individual and citizen who is committed to continued learning throughout life." If ESL students are to gain the essential knowledge and skills identified in Vermont's Education Goals, *all school districts* will need to be committed to seeing that they receive equal educational opportunities.

According to Commissioner Mills' (1994), the State Department of Education will begin monitoring school districts for compliance with ESL and Title VI requirements three months from the date this handbook is made available. The *English as a Second Language (ESL) Policy and Procedures Checklist*, Appendix C, p. 45, can be used as a guideline for reviewing the district ESL policy and procedures.

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[1]ESL teachers, classroom teachers and other school personnel should communicate on a more frequent basis about the daily instructional needs of their LEP students.

Anyone with questions about district policies and procedures should first contact: Karen Richards, Attorney and Civil Rights Enforcement Officer for the State Department of Education. Her role is to make recommendations concerning compliance issues and to investigate complaints.

TESOL Standards: Ensuring Access to Quality Education for Language Minority Students (9/92)

Language minority students are those students who learned a language other than English as their first language. These students may be immigrants, refugees, or native born Americans. They may come to school with extensive formal education or they may be academically delayed or illiterate in their first language. Such students arrive at school with varying degrees of English proficiency. Some may not speak English at all; others may speak English, but need assistance in reading or writing English.

Whatever the case, it is clear that schools that hope to help these students meet the National Education Goals must provide special assistance to them. While the type of special assistance may vary from one district or school to another, all special assistance programs must give language minority students full access to the learning environment, the curriculum, special services and assessment in a meaningful way.

Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) offers the following standards of access to help schools judge the degree to which programs of special assistance are helping language minority students to meet the National Education Goals. The standards have been developed by the TESOL Task Force on the Education of Language Minority Students, K-12, in the US. They are based on the most current research on language learning in academic settings.

Access to a Positive Learning Experience

1. Are the schools attended by language minority students safe, attractive, and free of prejudice?

2. Is there evidence of a positive whole-school environment whose administrative and instructional policies and practices create a climate that is characterized by high expectations as well as linguistically and culturally appropriate learning experiences for language minority students?

3. Are teachers, administrators, and other staff specifically prepared to tailor instructional and other services to the needs of language minority students?

4. Does the school environment welcome and encourage parents of language minority students as at-home primary teachers of their children and as partners in the life of the school? Does the school inform and educate parents and others concerned with the education of language minority students? Does the school systematically and regularly seek input from parents on information and decisions that affect all critical aspects of the education of language minority students, their schools and school districts?

Access to Appropriate Curriculum

5. Do language minority students have access to special instructional programs that support the second language development necessary to participate in the full range of instructional services offered to majority students?

6. Does the core curriculum designed for all students include those aspects that promote (a) the sharing, valuing, and development of both first and second languages and cultures among all students and (b) the higher order thinking skills required for learning across the curriculum?

7. Do language minority students have access to the instructional programs and related services that identify, conduct and support programs for special populations in a district? Such programs include, but are not limited to, early childhood programs, special education programs, and gifted and talented programs, as well as programs for students with handicapping conditions or disabilities, migrant education programs, programs for recent immigrants, and programs designed for students with low levels of literacy or mathematical skills, such as Chapter 1.

Access to Full Delivery Services

8. Are the teaching strategies and instructional practices used with language minority students developmentally appropriate, attuned to students' language proficiencies and cognitive levels, and culturally supportive and relevant?

9. Do students have opportunities to develop and use their first language to promote academic and social development?

10. Are non-classroom services and support services (such as counseling, career guidance,and transportation) available to language minority students?

11. Do language minority students have equal access to computers, computer classes and other technologically advanced instructional assistance?

12. Does the school have institutional policies and procedures that are linguistically and culturally sensitive to the particular needs of language minority students and their communities?

13. Does the school offer regular, nonstereotypical opportunities for native English-speaking students and language minority students to share and value one another's languages and cultures?

Access to Equitable Assessment

14. Do language minority students have access to broadly based methods of assessing language and academic achievement in the content areas that are appropriate to students' developmental level, age, and level of oral and written language proficiency in the first and second languages? Are these measures nonbiased and relevant? Are the results of such assessments explained to the community from which the student comes in the language which that community uses?

15. Do language minority students have access to broadly based methods of assessing special needs? Again, access is further defined by using measures that are nonbiased and relevant, the results of which are explained to the community from which the student comes and in the language which that community uses.

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TESOL Statement on the Education of K-12 Language Minority Students in the United States

The population of ethnolinguistically diverse students in the primary and secondary schools of the United States has grown dramatically. So dramatically, in fact, that language minority students are for the first time the majority of students in many school districts. In order for the United States to take advantage of the great cultural and linguistic diversity brought by our language minority students to the United States and its schools, we must first recognize this diversity as a national resource.

We must also recognize, however, that students come from a variety of backgrounds and circumstances. Some are immigrants, some are refugees, while others are native born Americans of different language heritages. These students enter US schools with a variety of educational experiences. Some have received extensive formal education in their home countries and are on grade level in all content areas and in reading their first language. Others have had their education delayed or interrupted and may be academically behind their peers in the U.S. and their countries of origin.

To meet the needs of such students, TESOL supports programs which promote students' growth in English language proficiency, enhance cognitive growth, facilitate academic achievement, and encourage cultural and social adjustment. Such programs include:

* Comprehensive English as a Second Language instruction for linguistically diverse students which prepares them to handle content area material in English.
* Instruction in the content areas which is academically challenging, but also is tailored to the linguistic proficiency, educational background and academic needs of students.
* Opportunities for students to further develop and/or use their first language in order to promote academic and social development.
* Professional development opportunities for both ESOL and other classroom teachers which prepare them to facilitate the language and academic growth of linguistically and culturally different children.

TESOL Statement on the Preparation of Primary and Secondary Teachers in the United States

All teachers working in K-12 education today face the challenge of responding to an increasingly diverse student population. This is especially true of those teachers who are responsible for the second language learning and academic achievement of language minority students.

Both ESOL and regular classroom teachers need special skills which prepare them to deal with language minority students in an academic setting. These skills may be learned through courses of study available through teacher preparation programs offered in colleges and universities, as well as through in-service education and professional development programs offered by school districts.

This means that teacher preparation and training programs operating at the college and university level must develop or refine presently offered programs in order to become more responsive to the needs of professionals who will be teaching language minority children in K-12 settings. Colleges and universities must structure programs of study so that ESOL teachers receive training which includes an emphasis on learning processes, child development, literacy development and methods of teaching content material to culturally and linguistically diverse students. Conversely, regular classroom teachers must participate in programs of study which include training on the nature of second language acquisition in an academic setting and language sensitive content teaching methodologies.

In-service education or staff development should be designed with two types of teachers in mind: those who work as ESOL professionals, and those who work as regular classroom teachers, but who teach language minority children. By developing ESOL-based in-service which targets the needs of both groups of teachers, teaching skills may be enhanced and/or refreshed.

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ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE (ESL)
POLICY AND PROCEDURES
CHECKLIST

INTRODUCTION

Each school district in Vermont is required to have an ESL policy and procedures to implement it. This checklist can be used by your district as a guide in reviewing an ESL policy and procedures for completeness.

GENERAL INFORMATION

1. Does your school district have a policy and procedures? _____ yes _____ no

2. How many ESL students does the school district currently have? #_____.

3. Have all of these students been formally identified and assessed? _____ yes _____ no. If not, how many have not been assessed _____?

4. Are any of the students who have been identified as eligible for ESL services also eligible for special education or section 504 services? _____ yes _____ no. If yes, how many? _____.

IDENTIFICATION

5. Does your school district have written procedures for identifying students from a non-English language background? (NELB) _____ yes _____ no

   a) Do the procedures include use of a form for screening? _____ yes _____ no

6. Is there a process for screening of student's linguistic, academic and cultural background in order to determine whether the student needs a formal assessment? _____ yes _____ no

ASSESSMENT

7. Does your school district have written procedures for formal assessment of the student's English proficiency to determine the kind and quantity of services to be provided? _____ yes _____ no

8. If the answer to question 7 is yes, check the boxes that apply to your school's assessment procedures:
   _____require use of accurate instruments to assess the student's oral and reading/writing skills in English and in the native language whenever possible.
   _____specify the instruments to be used in assessment.
   _____provide for assessment of the student's academic background and content knowledge/skills (e.g. informal interview, transcripts, formal tests).
   _____require identification of gifted/talented ESL students.

SERVICES

9. Do the procedures require a special language assistance program? _____ yes _____ no

10. Do the procedures require placement in a specially designed program? _____ yes _____ no

11. Is the instructional program design specified? _____ yes _____ no

12. If the answer to question 11 is yes, is the program model

_____English as a Second language
_____Bilingual Education
_____Other. Specify if known _____

13. Do the procedures require qualified personnel to teach these students (i.e. education personnel with formal training in teaching second language learners)? _____ yes _____ no

14. If the answer to question 13 is no, do the procedures require those already on staff to work towards attaining formal qualifications? _____ yes _____ no

15. Do the procedures require services to be delivered in the least segregated environment possible? _____ yes _____ no

MONITORING

16. Do the procedures specify that students should be monitored periodically to determine progress? _____ yes _____ no

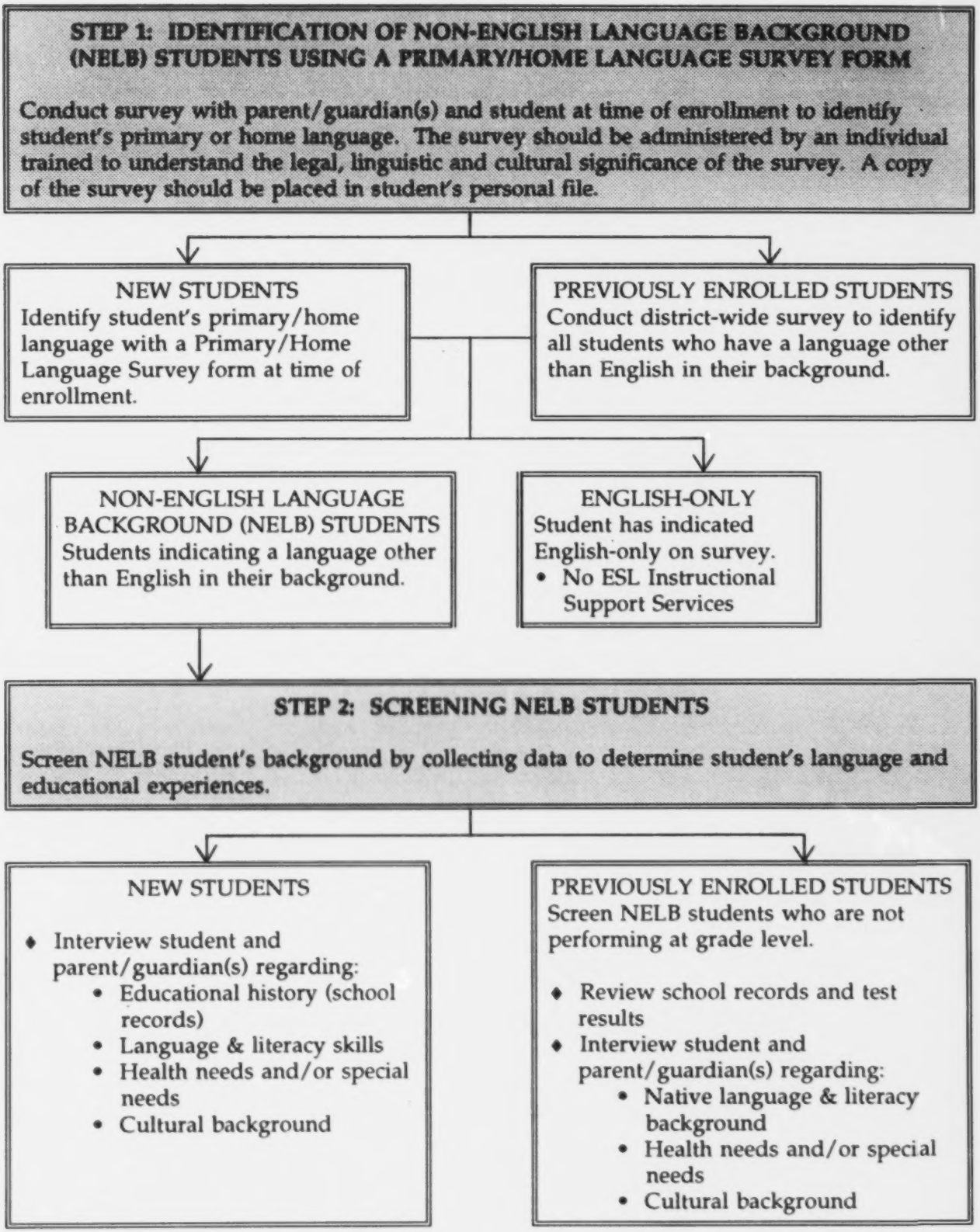
17. If the answer to question 16 is yes, do the procedures include:
_____criteria for periodically assessing progress?
_____objective criteria (such as test scores that test both oral and reading/writing skills) for determining when a student is no longer eligible for ESL services?
_____monitoring after services have terminated to evaluate success of the student?
_____method of revising program, if necessary?

INTERACTIVE GUIDES:

Recommended Steps for Serving English as a Second Language (ESL) Students

Guide for Writing District ESL Policy & Procedures

Recommended Steps for Serving English as a Second Language (ESL) Students


STEP 1: IDENTIFICATION OF NON-ENGLISH LANGUAGE BACKGROUND (NELB) STUDENTS USING A PRIMARY/HOME LANGUAGE SURVEY FORM
Conduct survey with parent/guardian(s) and student at time of enrollment to identify student's primary or home language. The survey should be administered by an individual trained to understand the legal, linguistic and cultural significance of the survey. A copy of the survey should be placed in student's personal file.
NEW STUDENTS
Identify student's primary/home language with a Primary/Home Language Survey form at time of enrollment.
PREVIOUSLY ENROLLED STUDENTS
Conduct district-wide survey to identify all students who have a language other than English in their background.
NON-ENGLISH LANGUAGE BACKGROUND (NELB) STUDENTS
Students indicating a language other than English in their background.
ENGLISH-ONLY
Student has indicated English-only on survey.
• No ESL Instructional Support Services
STEP 2: SCREENING NELB STUDENTS
Screen NELB student's background by collecting data to determine student's language and educational experiences.
NEW STUDENTS
♦ Interview student and parent/guardian(s) regarding:
• Educational history (school records)
• Language & literacy skills
• Health needs and/or special needs
• Cultural background
PREVIOUSLY ENROLLED STUDENTS
Screen NELB students who are not performing at grade level.
♦ Review school records and test results
♦ Interview student and parent/guardian(s) regarding:
• Native language & literacy background
• Health needs and/or special needs
• Cultural background

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STEP 3: INITIAL ASSESSMENT OF NELB STUDENTS' LANGUAGE AND ACADEMIC SKILLS FOR CLASSIFICATION AND INSTRUCTIONAL PLACEMENT

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ASSESS ENGLISH LANGUAGE & NATIVE LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY

Classify the student's English language proficiency (listening, speaking, reading and writing) and determine instructional level.

(NEP) Non-English Proficiency	Entry-Level	• No comprehension, verbal production or reading/writing skills in English
(LEP) Limited English Proficiency	Beginner	• Limited comprehension • Speech limited to isolated words & simple phrases • No or minimal reading & writing skills
	Intermediate	• Improving comprehension of everyday speech and increased fluency, vocabulary and grammatical control • Very limited ability to understand classroom discourse and read/write in English for academic purposes
	Advanced	• Good conversational skills • Still lacks control of academic language • Requires support in content area classes
(TEP) Transitional English Proficiency	Transitional	• Excellent conversational skills • Level of academic language not yet at full potential or comparable to peers • Expanding listening, reading/writing, thinking skills for grade-level academic work
(FEP) Fluent English Proficiency	Fluent	• Excellent control of social and academic language • Grade appropriate listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills

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ASSESS ACADEMIC SKILLS/KNOWLEDGE FOR INSTRUCTIONAL PLACEMENT

- Review student's previous academic performance (school records, formal interview).
- Assess student's skills in the content areas in English and the native language, whenever possible, with appropriate informal/formal methods.

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STEP 4: PLACEMENT AND PROVISION OF APPROPRIATE SERVICES

Review student's language and academic needs and begin process of planning appropriate instructional program.

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INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAMS & SUPPORT SERVICES

- Alternative language program--e.g., ESL, Bilingual
- Content area instruction--e.g., Content-based ESL, Sheltered Content, Bilingual Instruction in the Content Area(s), Native Language Tutoring in Content Area(s)
- Acculturation & Counseling Services
- Other program options--**[Refer to Chapter Eight, p. 127]**.

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STEP 5: MONITORING & GUIDING STUDENT PROGRESS & PROGRAM EFFECTIVENESS

- **Monitor & guide students' progress in developing language and content skills/knowledge through informal/formal assessment.**
- **Determine when student is ready to participate fully in grade-level classes (exit criteria).**
- **Monitor for 3 years following exit from ESL and academic support services.**
- **Evaluate effectiveness of individualized & district-level programs for ESL Students.**

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GUIDE FOR WRITING DISTRICT ESL POLICY & PROCEDURES

It is the intent of the _____ school board to ensure that all English as a Second Language (ESL) students have meaningful access to all school programs. Language and academic assistance will be provided to help ESL students overcome language barriers and participate in instructional programs. The superintendent or his or her designee shall be responsible for developing and implementing procedures to comply with federal and state laws which define standards for serving ESL students.

The required steps for ensuring ESL students access to a quality educational program, and their legal references, are stated below.[1] These steps may serve as policy goals. Under each goal is a box containing items to guide districts in describing procedures to implement the goals.

REQUIREMENT: Identify and screen all students *whose primary or home language is other than English*, and who therefore may have difficulty performing grade-level classwork in English and achieving on parity with *native* English speaking peers.

References: *Office for Civil Rights 1970 Memo (list of requirements based on Title VI of 1964 Civil Rights Act); Lau v. Nichols 1974 (Supreme Court decision); The Provision of an Equal Education Opportunity to Limited English Proficient Students, Office for Civil Rights; December 1992; OCR September 1991 Memo.*

Procedures A and B:

A. Describe the procedures your district will implement to *identify* all students whose *primary or home language* is other than English (i.e., forms and routines used to identify both new enrollees and previously enrolled students; training for intake staff; time frame for administering procedures; use of translated forms and interpreter/translators as needed). **[Refer to Step One: Identification of NELB Students, Chapter Five, p. 65.]**

Worksheet

[1] **This guide is based on the Vermont School Board Association's 1994 *Model Policy for Limited English Proficiency Students*, Office for Civil Rights' guidelines, and Robert C. Parker's *Compliance Reference Chart*.**

B. Describe the procedures for *initial screening* of linguistic, educational, & cultural background of all students who are identified as having a primary or home language other than English (i.e., initial screening processes--review of previous school records and test scores; formal interview with student(s), parent/guardian(s) and interpreter using screening form; health/special needs screening; person(s) responsible for initial screening activities; timelines). **[Refer to Step Two: Screening of NELB Students, Chapter Six, p. 72.]**

Worksheet

REQUIREMENT: Assess the English language proficiency (*and whenever possible, primary/home language and academic skills*) of students to determine the need for alternative instructional services and placement in appropriate services (classify English proficiency level & assess for instructional placement).

References: *Office for Civil Rights 1970 Memo (list of requirements based on Title VI of 1964 Civil Rights Act); Gomez v. Illinois State Board of Education 1987, US Court of Appeals, 7th Circuit; The Provision of an Equal Education Opportunity to Limited English Proficient Students, Office for Civil Rights, December 1992; OCR September 1991 Memo.*

Procedures A and B:

A. Describe the procedures that will be used to assess the English language proficiency (listening, speaking, reading and writing) of all students for whom initial screening provided no objective proof of fluent English proficiency or record of grade-level content skills/knowledge (i.e., formal & informal assessment methods and tests; designated evaluator(s); criteria to be used in determining language proficiency classifications and instructional placement). **[Refer to Assessment Plan Outline in Appendix G, Chapter Seven, p. 106 for guide in developing comprehensive identification, screening, assessment and monitoring procedures. Also, Step Three: Initial Assessment of NELB Students for Classification & Placement, Chapter Seven, p. 89.]**

Worksheet

B. Recommended Option: Describe the strategies for assessing students' proficiency in the primary or home language and academic background and content knowledge/skills, (i.e., formal and informal assessments; use of bilingual evaluators and/or interpreters; use of primary language and second language). **[Refer to Step Three: Initial Assessment, Chapter Seven, p. 89.]**

Worksheet

REQUIREMENT: Design or adopt instructional programs based on effective teaching practices in the field of second language education. Instructional programs should help ESL students develop English language skills of comprehension, speaking, reading, writing and higher-order thinking skills necessary for learning and achieving in grade-level classes at a level comparable to English-speaking peers. Instruction provided must be designed specifically for student's ESL proficiency and cognitive levels and be sufficient duration of time for the student to develop academic language skills.

References
Castañeda v. Pickard 1981, US Court of Appeals, 5th Circuit; US Mandate: Equal Education Act 1974; Titles VI of Civil Rights Act 1964; Rios v. Read 1977, Clinton v. Brentwood 1977, 1978; Gomez v. Illinois State Board of Education 1987, US Court of Appeals, 7th Circuit; The Provision of an Equal Education Opportunity to Limited English Proficient Students, Office for Civil Rights, December 1992.

Procedures: A and B:

A. Describe instructional placement procedures for students needing language assistance and academic support programs. **[Refer to Step Four: Placement and Provision of Appropriate Services--*Instructional Placement and Planning Procedures*, Chapter Eight, p. 120 and *Guidelines & Resources for Placement and Provision of Appropriate Instructional and Support Services*, p. 124.]**

Worksheet

B. Describe the language and content instruction that will be provided to ESL students (i.e., program design; instructional approaches; curriculum; materials and resources; scheduled hours of ESL instruction based on proficiency classifications and ESL instructional levels; classroom space; and supplemental or adjunct services. **[For detailed outline to use as instructional planning guide, see Appendix H, Chapter Eight, p. 150. Also, refer to *Appropriate Instructional and Support Services*, p. 124.]**

Worksheet

REQUIREMENT: Provide qualified teachers for ESL students. Qualified professionals are needed to carry out the district's chosen language instruction program. If unsuccessful in efforts to hire qualified staff: (a) require teacher(s) to work toward obtaining formal qualifications and (b) provide sufficient interim training and assistance for teacher(s). (Recruitment of qualified staff must be well-documented).

***References**: Title VI of the Civil Rights Act 1964; Equal Education Act 1974; Castañeda v. Pickard 1981, US Court of Appeals, 5th Circuit; Keyes v. School District #1 1984, US District Court; Office for Civil Rights September 1991 Memo.*

Procedure:

Identify staff who coordinate and teach instructional programs for ESL students in all schools, (i.e., required qualifications--in-service training, formal college coursework, ESL teaching experience, or a combination of these). Describe how teachers will be supervised and evaluated and also training and support that will be provided for language and content teachers working with ESL students. If unable to recruit qualified teachers, describe the district's interim plan. **[Refer to Placement and Provision of Appropriate Services, Chapter Eight, p. 130, for description of staffing/training requirements.]**

Worksheet

REQUIREMENT: Objectively assess the ongoing progress of ESL students in developing grade-level language and content skills/knowledge. This is done in order to reclassify language proficiency and determine when students can be assigned to academic classes on either a partial or full-time basis. Standards for exit from language and academic support programs should include objective assessments, and should be designed to determine whether students are able to read, write and comprehend English well enough to participate meaningfully in the school district's programs.

References: Castañeda v. Pickard 1981; US Court of Appeals, 5th Circuit; The *Provision of an Equal Education Opportunity to Limited English Proficient Students, Office for Civil Rights, December 1992; OCR September 1991 Memo; Keyes v. School District #1, US District Court, 1983.*

Procedures A and B:

A. Describe how your district will monitor and guide the ongoing development of ESL students' language and content skills/knowledge (i.e., procedures, strategies/tests (informal & formal methods). **[Refer to Step Five: Monitoring and Guiding Student Progress & Program Effectiveness, Chapter Nine, p. 171.]**

Worksheet

B. Describe procedures, multiple criteria, and methods (informal & formal) which will be used to determine when to exit ESL students form services. **[Refer to Step Five: Monitoring and Guiding Student Progress & Program Effectiveness, Chapter Nine, p. 177.]**

Worksheet

REQUIREMENT: Monitor the academic achievement of students reclassified as fluent English proficient to determine whether they are successful completing grade-level academic work. Monitoring of newly reclassified students should take place for three years to ensure that ongoing needs of non-English language background students are addressed.

***References**: Castañeda v. Pickard 1981, US Court of Appeals, 5th Circuit; OCR September 1991 Memo.*

Procedure:

Describe how your district will monitor the performance of ESL students after they have been reclassified as fluent English proficient and placed full-time in grade-level classes without services, (i.e., persons who will monitor performance; procedures; policy if student is found to be having difficulty). **[Refer to Step Five: Monitoring and Guiding Student Progress & Program Effectiveness, Chapter Nine, p. 181.]**

Worksheet

REQUIREMENT: Maintain adequate records of the educational level and progress of each ESL student identified as in need of language and academic support programs, and make them available to appropriate staff members and parent/legal guardian(s).

References: *Castañeda v. Pickard 1981, US Court of Appeals, 5th Circuit; The Provision of an Equal Education Opportunity to Limited English Proficient Students, Office for Civil Rights; OCR September 1991 Memo.*

Procedure:

Describe how your district will maintain and share records indicating ESL students' progress in language and content skills/knowledge. **[Refer to Step Five: Monitoring and Guiding Student Progress & Program Effectiveness, Chapter Nine, pp. 172, 177.]**

Worksheet

REQUIREMENT: Evaluate language and academic assistance *district programs* for ESL students periodically and make modifications when necessary. Document services provided, the program's successful effect on student performance, and modifications to make the program successful (burden of proof on the district).

References: *The Provision of an Equal Education Opportunity to Limited English Proficient Students, Office for Civil Rights, December 1992; OCR September 1991 Memo.*

Procedure:

Describe how your district will document services and evaluate the effectiveness of alternative language and academic programs serving ESL students, (i.e., frequency of program evaluation; resource to be utilized; persons in charge; and a process for modifying programs if students are doing poorly.) **[Refer to Step Five: Monitoring and Guiding Student Progress & Program Effectiveness, Chapter Nine, p. 183.]**

Worksheet

REQUIREMENT: Provide notices of school activities and important information about their children to parent/guardian(s), who are not proficient in English, in a language they can understand.

References: *Office for Civil Rights 1970 Memo; The Provision of an Equal Education Opportunity to Limited English Proficient Students, Office for Civil Rights, December 1992; OCR September 1991 Memo.*

Procedures: Describe the steps your district will take to inform parent/guardian(s) who are not proficient in English, in a language they can understand (i.e., translations of forms; use of interpreter/translator resources). **[Refer to Step One: Identification of NELB Students, Chapter Five, p. 65.]**

Worksheet

REQUIREMENT: Take affirmative steps to ensure that ESL students will not be assigned to Special Education on the basis of limited English proficiency.

References: *The Provision of an Equal Education Opportunity to Limited English Proficient Students, Office for Civil Rights, December 1992; Office for Civil Rights 1970 Memo (list of requirements based on Title VI of 1964 Civil Rights Act); OCR September 1991 Memo; Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA; Jose P. v. Ambach 1979(Federal Court decision).*

Procedures: Describe the steps your district will take to prevent *inappropriate* placement of ESL students in special education solely on the basis on language skills (i.e., involvement of ESL or bilingual specialists; providing access to nonbiased--linguistically and culturally--methods of assessing special needs; assessing students in primary or home language, whenever possible; using appropriate strategies or tests for ESL students; notification and involvement of parent/guardian(s) re referrals and special education evaluations (in a language they understand). **[Refer to Step Two: Screening, Chapter Six, p. 82.]**

Worksheet

STEP ONE: IDENTIFICATION OF NON-ENGLISH LANGUAGE BACKGROUND (NELB) STUDENTS

PURPOSE

Federal Law and Office for Civil Rights Guidelines require that districts identify all students who have *"limited English proficiency" (LEP).* These are students who have a primary or home language other than English and lack the necessary English language skills in one or more of the skill areas--listening, speaking, reading or writing--to do grade-level work. They are entitled to special language, academic and cultural support services to overcome language barriers and to help them succeed in school.

The first step in identifying students with limited English proficiency is to screen all students from a non-English language background (NELB). Although many NELB students have attained a high level of English proficiency and are successful in their academic classes, it is still important for districts to have an initial identification and screening process that identifies *all NELB students.* The ultimate purpose is to identify those NELB students who have limited English proficiency and require specially designed language assistance programs.

A NELB student is one for whom at least one of the following statements is true:

- the student's *primary (first acquired)* language is other than English, regardless of which language the student now uses most frequently; or
- the language most often spoken by the student is other than English; or
- a language other than English is spoken *in the student's home.*

PROCEDURES

The Vermont Department of Education is required by the federal government under Public Law 100-297, Sec. 7032, to collect, analyze and publish data and information *annually* on students with limited English proficiency enrolled in Vermont's public and private schools in grades K-12.

Commissioner Mills (1991) has outlined the *affirmative steps* that schools must take to enable students to overcome language barriers in the classroom. The affirmative steps required include the "identification of all students who are from a non-English language background."

In conjunction with the Vermont Department of Education, the Language & Cultural Affairs Program at UVM's Office of Rural Education administers an *ongoing* Primary/Home Language Survey in all Vermont school districts. The cooperation of school districts with the survey process is essential in collecting data that accurately reflects the population of NELB students in Vermont. It is also a prerequisite for identifying students with limited English proficiency in order to provide them with the appropriate services.

The following procedures are recommended to identify students with limited English proficiency who either enroll as new students or were previously enrolled.

Primary/Home Language Survey: New Enrollees

Collection of language information

The first step in identifying students is to survey *all new students* with a *Primary/Home Language Survey form* at the time of registration. A copy of the Vermont survey form is provided in Appendix E, p. 69. It includes questions designed to learn about the student's language background. Translations of the survey form, in some languages, are available from the LCAP upon request.

Individuals responsible for administering the survey to new enrollees should be trained to administer it properly and consistently. They need to understand the legal, linguistic and cultural factors related to administering the primary/home language survey. A courteous and open attitude about communicating with adults or older students who come from diverse cultures and speak English with varying degrees of proficiency is essential.

If the parent/guardian(s) of the student are able to speak English, the purpose of the survey should be explained to them. The purpose of the survey is to make sure that their child's instructional needs, including any need for language assistance, are identified and appropriate services provided. Parents/guardians should be informed of the right of any students learning English as a Second Language to an alternative language program and academic support services under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act. They should also be told that the results of the survey and subsequent screening & placement procedures are not reported to immigration officials.

Parent/guardian(s) of students should be asked to answer the survey questions on the survey form for *each* child they register. In cases where high school students do not have a parent/guardian, they may be asked to answer the survey questions during registration, provided they speak English.

In cases where the parent/guardian(s) or an older student cannot communicate in English well enough to understand or answer the survey questions accurately, the school will need to arrange for an interpreter to help with the explanations and administration of the survey. If communication problems make the completion of the survey impossible at this time, it is recommended that this be done during the formal interview with an interpreter present within 10 days of enrollment. For information re: working with an interpreter/translator and organizations to contact for assistance in locating one, see Appendix E, p. 70.

Interpretation of information & follow-up

If the parent/guardian answers "English" to *all questions* on the survey, it is probably safe to assume that the student is a monolingual speaker of English and does not need an alternative language program. Be aware, however, of the possible exceptions:

- a child whose primary caregiver speaks a language other than English;
- family members who do not respond accurately because they fear repercussions (e.g., notification of immigration authorities, educational disadvantage or discrimination) if acknowledging national origin or language/cultural background. Some parents believe that a child who receives special services will not learn English as well as if immersed in the regular instructional program all day. Also, some refugees and immigrants have had experiences which make them mistrustful of such questions.

If the school has reason to believe that the survey information is inaccurate, further tactful inquiry or reassurance of the benefit of services to the child may be necessary.

If the answer to any question is a language other than English, the person registering the student contacts the ESL Coordination Team responsible for conducting Step Two, screening of NELB students, and forwards them a copy of the completed survey. The survey form containing information about the student's language background serves as the basis for screening, assessment and placement activities.

Documentation and reporting of language information

The original survey form remains in the student's file. Copies of all NELB student surveys should be sent to the Language & Cultural Affairs Program at UVM's Office of Rural Education. Every district should keep an annually updated list of NELB students in all schools.

Survey data is essential on the federal, state and local levels for the purpose of identifying ESL students who are in need of specially designed language programs.

District-wide Primary/Home Language Survey: Previously Enrolled Students

The Language & Cultural Affairs Program has worked with districts throughout Vermont to conduct initial surveys of NELB students for seven years now. The district survey is one mechanism for helping the district identify its own ESL population. Many districts have implemented the recommended process and cooperated with the request for data that is necessary at the local, state and federal levels for planning of more effective instructional services.

Districts that have not yet surveyed all previously enrolled students, or who have only students in some of the schools in the district, may lack an understanding or appreciation of the ultimate purpose of the survey. Without formal procedures for identifying and screening *previously enrolled* NELB students, the district's services for ESL students are incomplete.

The most obvious group of NELB students is newly enrolled immigrants or refugees. However, previously enrolled students may also come from a NELB background and have never gone through a proper identification and screening process. Some of them may be participating successfully in the regular instructional program. Others may have fluent English conversational skills but still lack the academic language skills in English which would enable them to learn more successfully in content area classes. These students have often been placed in the regular instructional program without, or with inappropriate, ESL services. They may include:

a) students born in the U.S. into families who speak languages other than English;

b) students who have transferred without school records from other districts without school records and are assumed to have fluent English proficiency;

c) students who started primary school speaking a language other than English and never received special language services because it was assumed that young children will be able to "catch up" if the teacher is sensitive and the child is given the same educational opportunities as English-speaking peers.

d) students who have been adopted from other countries and may not be identified as NELB students due to change of names and use of English as the home language in the adoptive family.

A common consequence of such misplacement is that the students fall increasingly behind in their language and content studies, and are soon enrolled in compensatory programs for remediation or special education programs. Such placement has been found to be a denial of equal access by numerous court cases.

A school district is required to redress past inappropriate practices and identify recent past non-English language background (NELB) enrollments who might need language development and content area assistance so that they can perform comparable to their English-speaking peers.

Conducting a district-wide survey of all students with a primary/home language other than English is especially important for identifying previously enrolled students who may never have been adequately screened and assessed to determine their level of English proficiency.

For information about implementing a district-wide home language survey process for identifying previously enrolled NELB students in your district, please contact the Title VII Consultant at the Language & Cultural Affairs Program.

STATE OF VERMONT
PRIMARY/HOME LANGUAGE SURVEY

DATE _____

STUDENT NAME _____ **SCHOOL** _____
(please print)

DATE OF BIRTH _____ **COUNTRY OF ORIGIN** _____

PERSON WHO CONDUCTED THE SURVEY _____

DIRECTIONS:

1. Please ask the parent(s) or guardian(s) the following questions about the child(ren) at the time of registration.
2. Please print the responses.
3. If the parent or guardian answers a language other than English for one or more of the questions contact the person(s) in your school who coordinates the initial screening, English proficiency assessment and instructional placement of Non-English Language Background students, and arrange for proficiency diagnosis.

QUESTION	RESPONSE
1. What was the <u>first</u> language your child learned to speak?	
2. What language do you use when speaking to your child?	
3. What language does your child use with brothers and sisters?	
4. What language does your child speak with grandparents, aunts and uncles, cousins, or caregivers?	
5. What language does your child speak with friends and neighbors outside the home?	

RESOURCES FOR WORKING WITH AN INTERPRETER/TRANSLATOR

REFERENCE MATERIALS

The following materials discuss important issues regarding using interpreter/translator services in educational settings. It is recommended that educators familiarize themselves with issues such as choosing an interpreter/translator, essential skills, confidentiality.[1] Signed parental consent may be needed if personally identifiable information will be discussed. Interpreters should also be made aware of confidentiality issues.

Fradd, S.H. & Wilen, D.K. (1990). Using Interpreters and Translators to Meet the Needs of Handicapped Language Minority Students and Their Families. *Program Information Guide No. 4.* Washington, DC: National Clearinghouse for Bilingual Education.

Fradd, S.H., Larrinaga McGee, P. with Wilen, D.K. (1994). Advocacy in the Assessment Process. *In Instructional Assessment: An Integrative Approach to Evaluating Student Performance* (pp. 352-358). Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley.

Paredes Scribner, A. (1993). The Use of Interpreters in the Assessment of Language Minority Students. *The Bilingual Special Education Perspective.* 12, 2.

CONTACTS

Ideally, an interpreter or translator will come from the same language *and cultural* group as the student. For example, a French-Canadian interpreter for a child from French-speaking Canada. There are several ways to contact a potential interpreter or translator:

1. Contact the American Red Cross Language Bank.

American Red Cross Language Bank
Northern Vermont Chapter
29 Mansfield Avenue
Burlington, VT 05401

Contact: Angela Russell
TEL: (802) 658-6400 or
1-800-843-3509

The Language Bank is a 24-hour volunteer interpreter service which is mainly intended to provide emergency services. Volunteers may request payment for more involved assignments. Forty-eight languages are spoken by interpreters/translators.

2. Contact foreign language teachers at the public school level.

3. Contact the foreign language department at a nearby university or college to find out if faculty or students can assist.

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[1] Although some of these materials are written with a special education audience in mind, they include information which could be generally applicable to using interpreters/translators in other situations.

4. Contact the international student program at a nearby university or college to find out if faculty or students can assist.

These programs can act as a referral point for schools looking for interpreters/translators of less commonly spoken languages. This is done on an ad hoc basis, when other resources cannot be found.

International Education Services
Living & Learning Center B-161
University of Vermont — TEL: (802) 656-4296
Burlington, VT 05405

Center for International Programs
Saint Michael's College
Winooski Park
Colchester, VT 05439 — TEL: (802) 654-2300

Language & Culture Center
School for International Training
Kipling Road, Box 676 — TEL: (802) 258-3344 or
Brattleboro, VT 05301 — TEL: (802) 257-7751 (switchboard)

5. Contact a refugee assistance program, cultural organization or community resource. Refugee resettlement, cultural, and community organizations that can be contacted about interpreting/translating services are listed in Appendix B, p. 32. Depending on the nature of the request, interpreters/translators working for these programs may or may not request payment.

6. Contact the LCAP if you are still having difficulty finding an interpreter/translator for a less commonly spoken language.

7. Other potential resources for locating an interpreter/translator for less formal assignments:

- relatives or sponsors of refugee or immigrant families
- parents, students, or community members from the same language or cultural group

STEP TWO: SCREENING OF NON-ENGLISH LANGUAGE BACKGROUND (NELB) STUDENTS

INTRODUCTION

The next step after identifying all students who come from a non-English language background is to arrange for ***screening.*** A list of students and/or individual surveys indicating NELB status should be forwarded to the ESL Coordination Team responsible for screening NELB students in the school or district.

Screening is a preliminary process for:

- reviewing school records and relevant documents containing information about the student's language proficiency and academic achievement;
- learning about the NELB student's background (life experiences, educational history, language(s), and culture);
- documenting any significant health or special needs.

The information and records gathered by the team are interpreted, documented and shared with those responsible for conducting formal assessment activities (Step Three: Initial Assessment) and, when appropriate, all school personnel having day-to-day responsibility for the student's education.

PURPOSE

One of the main goals of the screening is to separate NELB students whose ability to do grade-level work in English is unknown from NELB students who have *fluent English proficiency* and a *proven record of academic success in a regular instructional program.* The purpose of the screening of NELB students, then, is:

1) to determine the need for a formal assessment of the student's language and academic skills prior to placement;

2) to gather information that will be useful in choosing the type of assessment procedures, strategies and tests best suited to the student's linguistic and academic experiences;

3) to identify any health concerns or special needs that could impact on assessment and/or programming for the student;

4) to determine whether previously enrolled NELB students are performing grade-level work.[1]

[1]For students whose academic achievement is below average, the issue of whether this could be due to limited English proficiency should be addressed.

If the ESL Coordination Team cannot document *objective proof* that a student already has English language skills comparable to a native-English speaker and is doing grade-level work in the regular instructional program, then the NELB student must be *formally assessed* for initial classification and placement.

Screening involves collecting information that is essential for deciding whether to proceed with a formal assessment. For this reason, the ESL Coordination Team members need to be well-informed about second language acquisition, academic achievement, and culture. It is important to include members on the ESL Coordination Team who have prior experience in conducting screening and assessment activities and know how to differentiate between various stages of second language acquisition and language proficiency levels. If there is no one with this expertise, the district will need an outside consultant to provide in-service training for the ESL Coordination Team and an outside evaluator to conduct formal assessments of NELB students. *Screening is not a process for untrained personnel.*

LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY LEVELS

The ESL Coordination Team conducting screening activities should have unanimous agreement on the definitions of "limited English proficiency", "transitional English proficiency", and "fluent English proficiency." These will provide a conceptual framework for conducting screening activities.

The *Council of Chief State School Officers* defines fluent English proficiency in their 1992 publication "Summary of Recommendations and Policy Implications for Improving the Assessment and Monitoring of Students with Limited English Proficiency."

"A ***Fully English Proficient (FEP) Student*** is one who demonstrates abilities in *all four language skills*, as follows:

Listening the ability to understand the language of the teacher and instruction, comprehend and extract information, and follow the instructional discourse through which teachers provide information.

Speaking the ability to use oral language appropriately and effectively in learning activities within the classroom and in social interactions within the school.

Reading the ability to comprehend and interpret content area text at the age/grade appropriate level.

Writing the ability to produce written text with content and format, fulfilling classroom assignments at the age/grade appropriate level."

For students to be considered fluent in English, they must have a level of authenticity and automatic control of *both conversational and academic language at a level comparable to their peers* (Parker, 1993). The important questions to ask in identifying students with fluent proficiency in English are:

1) Can the student listen, speak, read and write in English at a level comparable to English-speaking peers?
2) Can s/he achieve at the appropriate grade level in the regular instructional program?

Students who have had no previous exposure to the English language and have little or no comprehension or speaking skills--"***non-English proficiency***"--are classified as beginners.

A student with ***"limited English proficiency" (LEP)*** is one who has a language background other than English and does not have the level of language and literacy skills in English to do grade-level work. Such a student needs language and academic support services to develop full proficiency in listening, speaking, reading, and writing in English for academic purposes. Students with limited English proficiency can have ***varying levels of language development*** *(entry-level, beginner, intermediate, advanced)* in the different language skill areas. For example, one student may have intermediate speaking and listening skills, but only be a emerging reader and writer; another might have intermediate reading/writing skills but little ability to speak or understand conversational English. Language proficiency and academic assessments, formal and informal, are used to distinguish the ESL instructional level of students with limited English proficiency.

Finally, there is a stage of English language acquisition frequently defined as ***"transitional English proficiency."*** This stage includes students who are beyond the intermediate stage and have advanced conversational skills in English. They may also be able to participate in classroom discussions in academic subject areas, but they are still developing speaking, listening and reading comprehension, writing and the more abstract thinking skills and metacognitive strategies (Parker, 1993). If students with transitional English proficiency are exited prematurely from ESL and academic support services, they often experience academic problems and are also at risk for being misidentified as learning disabled or impaired.

Anyone interested in learning more about these *different stages of language development and proficiency levels* is referred to the following resources:

- Parker, R.C. (1993). *Designing an Educational Program for Low-Incidence Numbers of Limited English Proficient Students* (pp. 13-17). Providence, RI:New England Multifunctional Resource Center.

- Parker, R.C. (1993). *Language Proficiency Classification and Instructional Placement Instrument: A Diagnostic Instrument for the Proficiency Assessment of Limited English Proficient Students.* Concord, NH:EEOO/New Hampshire Department of Education.

PROCEDURES

The following procedures are recommended as part of an initial screening process for NELB students to determine whether they are capable of participating successfully in the regular instructional program, without language or academic support services:

1. **Review of previous school records and recent test scores** (language proficiency, achievement, diagnostic), if available;

2. **Formal interview** with student(s), parent/guardian(s) and interpreter;

3. **Health/special needs screening,** when required.

This section of the handbook includes suggestions on how to carry out *screening procedures,* an initial *Screening Form for NELB Students,* and information about *resources for interpreting and translating services.*

1. Review of school records and available test scores

The first step in the screening of new enrollees and previously enrolled students, identified either through the Primary/Home Language Survey or district-wide survey, is for the ESL Coordination Team to review any previous academic records, test scores or other documents belonging to NELB students.

NELB students who are transferring from other schools in the U.S., or who are previously enrolled, may have sufficient documentation to indicate a high level of English language proficiency and academic achievement in English-only classrooms--e.g., a combination of course grades, test scores (language proficiency, achievement, diagnostic), awards.

If there is unquestionable "objective proof" that a NELB student is achieving academically on grade level and is fluent English proficient in listening, speaking, reading, writing, this should be documented on the screening form. The ESL Coordination Team should state the reason why no further screening or formal assessment is necessary. The screening form and all documentation of successful academic performance and fluent English proficiency should be added to the NELB student's cumulative file.

Any NELB students for whom there is insufficient documentation of English language proficiency in all skill areas and grade level achievement in English-only schools should continue through the screening process and receive a formal assessment.

If students bring academic documents from their home country or another foreign country, these should be reviewed as one source of information about the extent of the student's formal schooling--periods of school attendance, grade level attained, courses completed, literacy skills in the primary/home or other language(s), previous English language instruction, levels of English oral/literacy skills, and cognitive/academic skills in the primary language or in English.

While information about students' successful academic experiences in their home countries is extremely valuable for assessment and placement purposes, it does not alone provide sufficient reason to place a student in regular classes without a language assistance program.

The assistance of an interpreter/translator will most likely be required to translate non-English language documents. It may be possible to go over these documents with the interpreter at the time of the formal interview with the parents/guardians.

The Language & Cultural Affairs Program library contains several resources which might be helpful in understanding the educational systems in specific countries and evaluating a student's previous educational, language, cultural and experiential background:

- ***"English as a Second Language Curriculum Resource Handbook: A Practical Guide for K-12 ESL Programs"***(1993), Kraus International Publications. *Chapter 2--"Assessing Student Needs"*, by Caroline Linse, is especially relevant information for screening of NELB students.

- ***Handbooks for teaching students from a variety of different language groups,*** including Spanish-speakers, Portuguese, Vietnamese, Japanese, Chinese, Korean, Filipino, Khmer, and Laotian students.

NELB students who have been attending school in the U.S. and are not achieving at the grade level of their peers may also be identified through a *district review of records or a teacher referral*. The screening process for these students should start with the same thorough examination of any existing school records, grades, and results of standardized tests or informal assessments of the student's achievement in reading, language arts, and other academic subjects. If the student's scores are below district, state or national norms, the issue of limited proficiency in English should be addressed through Step Three: Initial Assessment of NELB Students.

Students' records should be reviewed for pertinent information about their life experiences, education, language and cultural background. Close attention should be paid to questions such as:

Did the student start kindergarten or enter school speaking another language?

Is there a history of school attendance in another country?

Was the student ever assessed for English language proficiency in listening, speaking, reading, and writing by a qualified evaluator?

Did s/he ever receive ESL instruction or other types of language assistance or academic support services? How much? For how long?

Any information in the student's file which answers these questions should be recorded on the Screening Form. If there are gaps in information about the student's language, cultural and educational background, an interview with the parents/guardians should be scheduled to get a complete profile. It is especially important to do this kind of information-gathering for NELB students experiencing academic problems prior to assessment for other learning problems.

2. Formal Interview

The formal interview provides an opportunity for the ESL Coordination Team to learn about the NELB student's background and to gather preliminary information that can assist those in charge of formally assessing the student's language skills and arranging for appropriate instructional services. The interview with parent/guardian(s) is especially important when there are no other reliable sources of information about the student.

The team should arrange a formal interview with the parent/guardian(s) of any new enrollee from a non-English language background whose level of English proficiency and academic language skills have not yet been confirmed. The same should be done for any previously enrolled NELB students whose academic performance is below grade level, when no previous information has been gathered about the student's language, cultural and educational background.

Ideally, an English as a Second Language (ESL) instructor with training and experience in second language acquisition, sociocultural issues, assessment and communication between culturally and linguistically diverse parents and schools will participate in the formal interview. Others especially knowledgeable about particular languages or cultural groups may be invited to participate, when appropriate.

The formal interview should take place within 10 days of registration and completion of the Primary/Home Language Survey, in order to ensure that the student, family and school staff agree to the process for assessment and placement in an appropriate educational program. In the case of previously enrolled students identified through the district-wide survey or teacher referral, the interview should be scheduled following the review of the student's academic records.

At the start of the interview the ESL Coordination Team should explain to the parent/guardian(s) the purpose of the Primary/Home Language Survey, the Formal Interview, and the Initial Assessment for Classification and Placement.

The ***purpose of the interview*** with the parent/guardian(s) and the student(s) in their primary/home language, or in English if they prefer, is to gather preliminary background information about students':

a) *Educational History--grade level and academic experiences;*

b) *English and primary/home language skills and learning experiences;*

c) *Biographical data and relevant family and cultural information;*

d) *Health or special needs.*

e) *Personal expectations, interest in various program options, and future aspirations--especially important for middle and secondary level students.*

A *Screening Form,* including questions for eliciting important information about the student's background, is included in Appendix F, p. 84. Interviewers should use their own discretion about the appropriateness of specific questions given that every situation is unique.

In situations where the parent/guardian(s) are uncomfortable or unable to communicate in English, the services of an interpreter/translator will be required. Schools are required by law to make every effort to provide parents with information in a language they can understand. The efforts to arrange a formal interview with an interpreter will pay off in terms of valuable information about the student's language, cultural, educational and family background. In addition, an interpreter may be able to assist the school in providing the parents with basic orientation to the American educational system, as well as informing them of their rights and responsibilities.

For more information about resources for working with an interpreter/translator and organizations that may be contacted for assistance in locating one, see Appendix E, p. 70.

Interpretation & Documentation of Formal Interview

The information and student records gathered during the formal interview should be recorded on the Screening Form, entered into the student's file and shared with those conducting the next step in the process, Step Three: Initial Assessment of NELB Students.

The formal interview process, along with the review of academic records, helps the team to determine the need for a formal assessment of the student's English language skills and native language proficiency and academic skills, whenever possible.

If the team determines that a NELB student does not need a formal assessment, they should indicate on the Screening Form the methods they used to determine that the student is fluent English proficient and able to participate fully at the appropriate grade level in an English-only classroom. Supporting documents should be included in the student's file.

If the outcome of the formal interview is a determination that a NELB student is 1) not able to demonstrate these abilities in all four language skills--listening, speaking, reading and writing--at a level comparable to peers and 2) is not achieving at the appropriate grade level in the regular instructional program, the student must be referred for a formal assessment (Step Three: Initial Assessment of NELB Students for Classification and Placement).

With most newly enrolled students from other countries, the need to continue to the next step, the formal assessment, will be clear-cut. Many of them can be immediately identified as needing language, academic and cultural support services to succeed in their classes.

For those students with *fluent oral English skills*, who may have been in the USA longer or even have been born here, the screening process will be trickier and require more intense scrutiny. It will be especially important to pay attention to ***evidence that the student has attained a high level of literacy and academic skills needed to do well in content classes.***

The team needs to be sensitive to identifying students who may have been overlooked for a variety of reasons--e.g., no previously existing services for ESL students; assumption that ESL students will "catch up" eventually if mainstreamed, etc. Research has shown that students develop conversational English skills in 1-2 years but many require at least 5-7 years before they have the academic language skills appropriate to their age/grade levels (Cummins, 1981; Collier, 1988).

For further discussion of second language acquisition, see Appendix B, p. 22.

3. Health/Special Needs

Physical Health

The formal interview provides an opportunity to ask the parent/guardian(s) if their child has any health or special needs that they wish to share or feel should be considered in developing an educational program. The decision to share a child's health history is totally up to the parent/guardian(s). School personnel should explicitly inform parents that they have no legal obligation to share any health information other than immunization records and certification by the doctor that they are eligible for school entry. Schools do not require details of health screenings. However, school health personnel are better able to serve children and make accommodations when parents share details about their children's health (e.g. chronic illnesses, physical needs).

If parent/guardians(s) wish to disclose any physical, emotional or other medical problems or special needs, the interviewer(s) notes them on the screening form. Any health conditions are best addressed early on, since they sometimes affect the child's adjustment to school, assessment strategies and outcomes, and placement/programming decisions.

Families should be referred to the appropriate school personnel or community services who can assist with further screening or assessment. This is especially important for immigrants or "secondary migrants" (refugees moving to Vermont from other states), who might not have undergone previous health screenings.

School personnel should respect confidentiality (with the exception of the "need to know") when parents choose to share health information about their children. The Family Educational Rights & Privacy Act and other federal laws protect against unwarranted disclosure of school records. IDEA and Section 504 prohibit discriminatory treatment of children on the basis of health or special needs.

The Vermont Department of Health has state regulations regarding immunizations and health screenings for all refugee children entering Vermont public schools. These standards also apply for immigrant children, although the Department currently tracks only refugee children to make sure that necessary screenings are completed.

As with all students, refugee and immigrant children should be immunized to meet minimum school entry standards. Written documentation of immunizations received prior to entry into the U.S. are acceptable. Students needing immunizations are allowed to attend school as long as there is a physician's written statement saying that immunizations are in process.

Caseworkers and sponsors of refugee resettlement programs assist newly arriving families in setting up appointments for physical exams which include health screenings. Refugee children should arrive in the U.S. with a chest x-ray, immunization record and treatment routines for any existing conditions. However, sometimes these records are lost and tests must be repeated. In the Burlington area, health exams and screenings are typically done through the Community Health Center, the University Health Center Pediatrics or Given Health Center. In other Vermont communities, refugees may be seen by local health department personnel and/or private health care providers.

The private health care providers conducting screening of refugee children notify the Department of Health of the results. The Department sends clients a copy of results for their own health records. An interpreter working with a public health nurse meets with the family to help them determine what information is appropriate to share. The Department does not share specific health information (e.g., TB or Hepatitis B status) with schools. The health care provider grants permission for the child to enroll in school.

The goal is to complete the medical appointment and health screenings within the first 30 days of arrival, so that children are able to attend school as soon as possible. Of course, missed appointments and other snafus can cause delays. However, when individual children are known to have exceeded this 30-day period, the district Superintendent may need to intervene to assure that the health screenings get done and children are not waiting months to enroll in school. Collaboration between various districts, health care agencies and providers in the Burlington area has resulted in a much more streamlined system for screening of refugee children.

Although the Office for Civil Rights has no specific requirements regarding health screening of refugee or immigrant students, it does state that Title VI requires all students to be treated equally. While the state may show legitimate reason for requiring different health screenings (e.g., living under environmental conditions where TB is prevalent), OCR views delays (legitimate or not) of 2-3 months in enrolling ESL students in school due to health concerns as a possible violation of the Title VI Civil Rights Act and/or Section 504.

Health screenings which the Department of Health requires for refugee children prior to school entry include:

1) Tuberculosis--skin test and X-ray, if skin test is positive and no chest x-ray has been done;

2) Hepatitis B;

3) STD, serological test for syphilis; and

4) ova and parasites tests for groups from endemic areas.

In addition to these health assessments, the Department of Health recommends that refugee children also be given screenings for hearing, vision, development, and hematocrit for iron.

The Refugee Resettlement Program assists refugees with interpreting for medical appointments. The Community Health Center on Riverside Avenue in Burlington currently has Vietnamese interpreters available two mornings and one evening a week. Nurses at the Burlington Local Office of the State Department of Health also work with interpreters.

Some organizations which have had experience providing health care services to non-English speakers are:

Vermont Department of Health
P.O. Box 70
Burlington, VT 05402

Contact: Audrey Larrow
TEL: 863-7333

Vermont Department of Health
Burlington Local Office
1193 North Ave.
Burlington, VT 05401

Contact: Mary McGinley
TEL: 863-7323

Vermont Department of Health
Office of Minority Health
108 Cherry St. P.O. Box 70
Burlington, VT 05402

Contact: Lauren Corbett
TEL: 863-7300

List continues on next page

Community Health Center
279 North Winooski Avenue
Burlington, VT 05401

Contact: Pat Parker
Contact: Marilyn McKenzie
TEL: 864-6309

University Pediatrics
1 South Prospect St.
Burlington, VT 05401

Contact: Sue Victory
TEL: 656-4696

Mental Health

Refugee and immigrant children often have experienced unusual hardships or trauma during their journey to a new land. Beyond the inevitable culture shock, it is important to be extra sensitive to the possibility of emotional or physical trauma refugee students may have been through.

Cultures view mental health issues in very different ways. It is important to understand and respect attitudes and practices common in dealing with mental health in other countries.

Schools may need to network with refugee service and mental health programs in order to identify appropriate counseling services for students experiencing serious emotional problems. Counseling should be done by professionals who speak the language and are familiar with the cultural backgrounds of the students, whenever possible. When appropriate services are not available locally, schools may need to explore the possibility of having trained bilingual interpreters work with counselors. Counselors or schools can contact the LCAP for referrals to out-of-state agencies with expertise or resources in mental health for refugee and immigrant populations.

Special Needs

At this stage of the screening process, the interviewer(s) might also ask if the student has any known learning difficulties or special needs that should be addressed. This is done mainly to identify children who already have documented special needs (e.g., visual or hearing impairments, physical impairments, speech disorders).

If parent/guardian(s) express a serious concern about the child's development or abilities in the primary/home language, the team may eventually need to consider referral for special education evaluation. However, this should not occur before the student has been given ESL and academic instruction for a realistic period of "wait time" (Parker, 1993).

Referrals for special education evaluations should be made only after consultations with experts in the assessment of ESL students for special education and extensive information gathering regarding the child's previous language and academic learning opportunities.

Evaluation of ESL students for special education is inevitably more complicated than evaluation of English-speaking students. There is a long history of inappropriate labeling of ESL students as learning disabled or impaired. Districts are urged to familiarize personnel with special education laws pertinent to the identification, assessment, placement and service delivery procedures for ESL students.

Distinguishing between a language disorder or learning impairment and difficulties due to lack of instructional opportunity for an ESL student is a very complex assessment process. Evaluations of ESL students for special education should always involve educators with specific skills and training in second language acquisition, cultural learning styles, and the assessment of ESL students. Non-biased assessment means that students will be evaluated by professionals with fluency in the student's native language and understanding of relevant cultural norms and values.

Dual expertise in the areas of both ESL/bilingual education and special education is still rare. However, there are universities and resource centers with professional bilingual special educators who can provide technical assistance and training. They may be able to suggest alternative assessment strategies when resources are limited.

Special education services should never supplant language development services required under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act. Even ESL students who are legitimately eligible for special education services still require a language development program, i.e., ESL or bilingual education.

For further information about appropriate identification and assessment of ESL students for special education, see Appendix G, p. 118.

SCREENING FORM FOR NELB STUDENTS

STUDENT PROFILE

A. Student/Family Information

School:		
Date of Enrollment:	New: Yes ___ No ___ Currently Enrolled: Yes ___ No ___	
Name:	Birthdate: Birthplace:	Sex: Grade:
Home Address:	Primary Language: Nationality:	Date of Entry (U.S.):
Cultural Background:		
Parents'/Guardians' Names:	Relation to Student:	Phone (H): Phone (W):

B. Review of Academic Records & Available Test Scores

Person(s) reviewing records: _____

School Records from the U.S.:

1. School(s) attended/locations _____

   _____

2. School transcript evaluation: Yes _____ Date: _____(Attach to this form) No _____

   Remarks:_____

   _____

3. Number of years in U.S. schools _____ Total Credits Earned (Secondary): _____

4. Periods of interrupted schooling due to frequent moves or attendance problems?

   _____

5. Record of retention? Yes _____ Grade _____ No _____

6. Previous enrollment in ESL or Bilingual Education Program? Yes ___ No ___

   Date: _____ Type of program: _____ Proficiency Level? _____

   School: _____

7. Participation in Chapter 1 program? Yes _____ Dates _____ No _____

8. Participation in Special Education program? Yes _____ Dates _____ No _____

School Records from the Home Country or Other Country:

1. Schools attended/locations _____

2. School transcript available? (Attach to this form) Yes _____ No _____

   Remarks about performance in basic subjects (strong/weak subjects?) _____

   _____

3. Language(s) of instruction _____

4. Age started school _____ Attended preschool program? Yes _____ No _____

   Total years of formal education _____

   Ever retained in a grade? Yes _____ Grade _____ No_____

5. Periods of interrupted schooling due to frequent moves or attendance problems?

   _____

6. Documentation of health or special education needs?

   Yes _____ (Attach to form) No _____

7. Written narrative about student's performance and/or school practices in student's home or host country? (Attach to this form) Yes _____ No _____

Test Scores from U.S. and/or Home Country:

English as a Second Language Proficiency Tests (Oral/Reading/Writing)		
Date:	Name of Test: Score:	Level: Classification:
Primary/Home Language Tests (Oral/Reading/Writing)		
Date:	Name of Test: Score:	Level: Classification:
Academic Achievement or Cognitive Skills Tests		
Date: Date:	Name of Test: Name of Test:	Raw Score: Percentile: Raw Score: Percentile:
Diagnostic Reading or Language Arts Test		
Date:	Name of Test:	Raw Score: Percentile:

C. Initial Interview with Student and Parents/Guardians

Name of Interviewer(s) _____ Date _____

Name of Interpreter _____ Address _____

Interpreter's Phone (H) _____ (W) _____

Note: This initial interview form is intended as a guide for gathering information that will ultimately benefit the student. Interviewers should use their own discretion about whether questions are appropriate and are relevant to the student's education. It is important to be sensitive to individual family's experiences. Also, it is not necessary to repeat questions if the answers can be found in the student's records.

Family/Cultural Background

How long has your family been in the U.S.? _____

How many persons in your family? _____

Names/ages of other children in school _____

_____

Where was your child born? Where were you (parents/guardians) born? _____

_____

How many years of schooling did you (parents/guardians) complete? _____

In what language(s) were you educated? _____

Is there anything about your family's cultural background that you would like the school to know about, e.g., cultural expectations, beliefs, values, practices?

_____

_____

Is there anything you want to say about personal characteristics or experiences of your child?

_____

_____

Student's Educational Background

At what age did your child start school? _____

What is the usual age to start school in your country? _____

How many years of school did your child complete? _____ Attend preschool? _____

In what other country has your child attended school? When? _____

How would you describe your child's educational experiences thus far? What was schooling like in your country (practices, instructional approaches, behavioral expectations, exams, languages of instruction?

_____

_____

What do you feel are your child's academic strengths/weaknesses? _____

_____

Has your child had any problems due to interrupted schooling? _____

_____

Ever had to repeat a grade? Yes _____ Grade _____ No _____

Does your child have prior knowledge of English? Yes _____ No _____.
Please describe your child's experiences with the language, e.g., informal exposure or formal instruction in school.

_____

_____

How would you describe your child's comprehension and speaking skills in English: 1) for social conversation?; 2) for classroom participation?

_____

_____

English reading/writing and language skills for doing academic work in math, social studies, science and other subject areas? Do you feel a language development program is important to your child's social and academic success?

_____

_____

Student's Health/Special Education Background

Does your child have any existing health problems that might affect his/her learning?

_____

Are there any known problems with your child's vision or hearing? _____

_____

Has your child been screened for required immunizations and health tests? _____

_____

Does your child have any learning difficulties or special needs that should be addressed?

_____

_____

Has your child experienced any recent problems, e.g., separation from family members, war, or personal trauma, for which s/he might need support from the school or social service agencies?

_____

_____

D. Outcome of NELB Student Screening

Check the appropriate box and provide necessary documentation:

⌂ A thorough review of the student's academic records and available test scores provided adequate documentation that the student has English skills comparable to his/her English-speaking peers and is achieving at the appropriate age/grade level in the regular instructional program.

Comments: _____

_____

_____

⌂ Following a review of the student's academic records/available test scores and an initial interview with the parents/guardians of the student, it has been determined that s/he needs to have a formal assessment in order to determine language proficiency level and instructional needs.

Comments: _____

_____

_____

Interviewers/Team responsible for decisions re this NELB student are:

Name _____ Date _____

Name _____ Date _____

Name _____ Date _____

Name _____ Date _____

A copy of this Screening Form should be kept in the student's permanent record and another forwarded to the person(s) responsible for coordinating or conducting formal assessment activities. This copy will be forwarded to:

Name _____ _____ Position _____

School _____ Date forwarded _____

Name _____ Position _____

School _____ Date forwarded _____

STEP THREE: INITIAL ASSESSMENT OF NELB STUDENTS FOR CLASSIFICATION AND PLACEMENT

The best way to ensure that all students are identified and assessed in a consistent and appropriate manner is for the district to have a *comprehensive assessment plan* in place (Parker, 1993). A plan spells out the procedures, strategies, tests and criteria the district will use for proficiency assessment and instructional placement. See Appendix G, p. 106 for an outline to use in developing a district assessment plan.

Once the ESL Coordination Team has completed identification and screening activities for a NELB student, the next step is to conduct an *initial assessment*. NELB students must be assessed for classification and placement purposes, if there is no *objective proof* that they have the English language skills required to do grade-level work.

GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR INITIAL ASSESSMENT

These guidelines are an overview of options for consistent and accurate assessment procedures, strategies and tests. A district might use them in developing their own effective initial assessment services. Following these general guidelines are more specific guidelines for each area of assessment: English language proficiency, primary/home language skills, and academic knowledge & skills. At the end of the chapter is a resource list for assessment reference and test materials, many of which are available on loan through the LCAP.

Procedures

The initial assessment process for proficiency classification and placement may take several weeks to complete and should begin as soon as the NELB student has been referred by the team.

If parents of a NELB student were not informed at the time of registration or screening of the initial assessment, as well as its purpose, this should be done prior to testing. At a later time, test results and placement options for their child should be discussed with them.

The team forwards all the information gathered through Steps One and Two: Identification and Screening to the person(s) conducting the assessment activities. This information about the student's previous education, language(s), culture and experiential background should be recorded on the *Screening Form*, Appendix F, p. 84.

The evaluator(s) reviews the screening form and accompanying documents in order to plan the appropriate assessment activities based on the student's unique background. Planning, administering and interpreting the assessment requires that an evaluator consider the following student variables:

- cultural, family and experiential background;
- previous exposure to English;
- age/grade level, as well as maturity of the student;
- previous schooling experiences in the primary/home language;
- previous schooling in the U.S. or abroad and types of language and academic support services received during this time;
- record of academic problems experienced in the regular instructional program.

Documenting Assessment Results

The results of all formal and informal assessments of English language proficiency, native language proficiency and academic skills & knowledge should be recorded on an *Initial Assessment Record Form*. See Appendix G, p. 110 for a sample.

The Initial Assessment Record Form and supporting documents are shared with everyone involved in decision-making about the student's instructional placement and used to make recommendations for instructional placement and adjunct services.

At a follow-up meeting to discuss the instructional placement, the form is shared with appropriate school personnel and the parents and then stored in the student's cumulative folder.

Strategies/Tests

Decisions about strategies and tests to be used in identification and placement of ESL students are made at the local level. Selecting strategies and tests that meet information requirements, student characteristics, and administrative concerns requires considerable thought, organization and planning. The ESL Coordination Team needs to consider the existing research and theories about language proficiency and academic achievement, as well as the purpose of the assessment, specific skills to be assessed, and best approaches.

In its 1992 publication, *"Summary of Recommendations and Policy Implications for Improving the Assessment and Monitoring of Students with Limited English Proficiency"*, the *Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO)* makes the following general recommendations concerning the selection of assessment instruments for purposes of classification, placement and exiting of students from language support programs. "Educators should:

- select assessment instruments based on sound psychometric practice and theoretically based research, including contemporary theories and research on language proficiency and communicative competence;

- select language proficiency tests and assessments in both English and the native language according to the following criteria:

  Collectively, tests should cover all communicative competencies, i.e., receptive (listening and reading) and productive (speaking and writing) skills.

  Tests should represent the age, grade and attention development of the student and reflect increasing complexity of language skills as maturation and language development continue;

  Assessments should measure the functional competence (what the children can do) in relation to the full range of demands of the classroom and the academic language needed to succeed.

  When more than one test or assessment instrument is used, tests should be equated to ensure comparability and complementarity. In addition, a norming study may be necessary to ensure comparability."

AREAS OF ASSESSMENT

I. Initial Assessment of English Language Proficiency -

To establish students' English language *proficiency classification* (NEP, LEP, TEP, or FEP)[1] and *instructional level* (entry-level, beginner, intermediate, advanced, transitional) in listening, speaking, reading and writing for social and academic purposes in order to determine:

- whether students have a level of *English language proficiency*[2] which enables them to do grade-level work;
- whether the student needs an alternative language program and/or adjunct support services to develop social and academic language skills;
- the student's current English language skills and instructional needs and an appropriate level of ESL instructional placement.

Recommended Options

II. Initial Assessment of Primary/Home Language Skills -

To determine students' language (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) skills in the primary/home language for social and academic purposes, to the extent possible.

III. Initial Assessment of Academic Knowledge & Skills -

To evaluate, to the extent possible, what grade-level skills and knowledge students have in academic areas for the purpose of instructional placement in the regular instructional program and/or for adjunct academic support services (e.g., tutoring, Chapter 1, etc.).

---

[1]NEP = Non English Proficiency, LEP = Limited English, TEP = Transitional English Proficiency, FEP = Fluent English Proficiency

[2]"Proficiency" here refers to the ability to understand, speak, read, write and learn in English for the purposes of both interpersonal communication and academic study in a classroom setting. Proficiency in the academic language is the ability to understand more decontextualized and cognitively demanding language as students advance in grade level (Cummins, 1984).

I. INITIAL ASSESSMENT OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY

A. Procedures

The following procedures for assessment of English language proficiency are intended as broad guidelines. Ultimately, evaluators need to use their own discretion about the best way to assess each individual student's language skills.

1. Newly Enrolled NELB Students

If the screening of a NELB student indicates that, beyond any shadow of a doubt, s/he has had absolutely no previous exposure to the English language or knowledge of the language through study, it is not recommended that the student go through a formal assessment of English language proficiency. Such a student should be identified as having non-English Proficiency (NEP) and placed at a Beginner Level of ESL instruction. The student could be tested after she has received a sufficient period of instruction in the language.

For students with some previous exposure or instruction in English, no matter how limited, it is recommended that the school arrange to assess the student. It is important to recognize and validate whatever English skills the student has acquired. If the evaluator senses that the student is very anxious or unable to express herself, the assessment should be postponed until later and the student placed at the Beginner Level.

Young children in Grades K - 1 should be assessed for oral (listening and speaking) skills, ideally using a reliable and valid English language proficiency test in conjunction with informal assessments. Using both approaches provides a more holistic picture of the student's language proficiency. Preliteracy and emerging reading/writing skills can also be assessed at these grade levels, if it seems appropriate to the situation.

Students in Grades 2-12 should be formally assessed with a reliable and valid English language proficiency test that assesses all language skill areas--listening, speaking, reading and writing--in conjunction with informal assessments. If the student has no English proficiency (NEP) and there is evidence that the student has never been exposed to reading and writing in English, an assessment of reading/writing skills will be pointless. In the case of older students who lack oral skills but have had previous study of English in their home country, the reading/writing test might still make sense. At any rate, there is no reason to continue with a reading/writing portion of an ESL proficiency test if the student finds it too difficult.

It is important to be sensitive to students whose screening background information shows minimal or interrupted schooling. Lack of experience with formal structured testing situations will surely affect results. Informally assessing the student's natural language may prove more effective. Informal assessment methods often provide the best profile of the students comprehension, speaking and reading/writing skills especially if the findings are used to build upon a student's cultural background, prior knowledge and interests.

2. *Previously Enrolled NELB Students*

Unless there is *objective proof* of fluent English proficiency and successful grade-level work, *every* NELB student should be assessed. This includes those who have been in the school system but never had ESL services or recently moved in from another district. Informal observations by school personnel that NELB students are "fluent" cannot be considered objective proof.

Districts should require that students, who score as having fluent English proficiency (FEP) on a comprehensive ESL proficiency test, also meet other criteria for a high level of English proficiency. The reason is that ESL proficiency tests do not necessarily measure whether students have the level of listening comprehension, oral fluency and reading/writing skills necessary to do grade-level work.

Depending on the district's general assessment practices, the English language proficiency of fluent English proficient students should be further assessed with either standardized achievement tests or informal assessments for reading and language arts. Prior to making a determination of fluent English proficiency, districts should show that students are within the range of average to above-average performance according to their district's measures of language proficiency.

B. Strategies/Tests

In the field of ESL, as in education in general, there are different perspectives on what assessment approaches are most useful. There is a lot of concern about the misuse of standardized tests. Along with the school restructuring movement has come a growing interest in informal assessments (also referred to as authentic assessment) which are done for the purpose of improving teaching and learning.

The LCAP recommends that districts use a combination of formal and informal methods of assessment. Multiple measures provide the best assurance that all aspects of students' language proficiency and content knowledge will be assessed and that students capacities, strengths and needs will be identified. Ultimately, it is up to educators to examine their underlying assumptions about second language acquisition and decide whether their district will use or adapt existing strategies and instruments, or develop new ones based on their own district's educational philosophy and curriculum.

1. English Language Proficiency Tests

One of the options for districts in assessing NELB students for initial classification and placement is to use a formal ESL proficiency test. Generally, this means a standardized, norm-referenced test that is available commercially. Some non-commercial ESL tests are also available.

ESL proficiency tests are intended to measure overall language proficiency and mastery of the structure of the language. These tests usually focus on discrete points of language--e.g., syntax, grammar, phonetics, vocabulary--and use an objective approach. Currently, there are ESL tests available which measure general English proficiency in all language skill areas--listening, speaking, reading and writing. These instruments consist of tests for different groupings of grade levels, e.g. K-1, 2-3, 4-6, 7-12.

For districts that do not have established ESL programs and ESL curriculum objectives, an ESL proficiency test can be a practical and fairly reliable way to identify students in need of ESL services. It helps the district to make an ***initial classification of language proficiency.***[3] When combined with informal assessments methods that assess the student's ability to use language in real-life social and academic situations, these tests are helpful in determining a level at which to begin ESL instruction.

A few words of caution about the use of ESL proficiency tests, however. The results of these tests should not be over-interpreted. The tests elicit language in a contrived situation. While they provide baseline data about oral/aural, reading and writing skills, they are not designed to test language learning aptitude, cognitive ability, or academic skills. Language proficiency tests may also contain some cultural bias, i.e., items and material that the student has never encountered before.

Districts with their own ESL curriculum and performance outcomes may prefer to develop their own formal ESL test or informal assessment procedures. Curriculum-based assessment tests what the student is being taught whereas standardized testing may not. For example, if students are taught about the life cycle of the earthworm, testing them on the social structure of bee colonies would not tell us what they learned.

Traditional ESL tests might measure some of the social and academic language skills needed for success in the regular instructional program, but should not be used as the sole criterion to determine fluent English proficiency or academic readiness. Some students may actually score as "fluent English proficient" on an ESL proficiency test, yet still lack the academic language and content skills necessary to do grade-level work. There are other aspects of student's language proficiency and academic skills that need to be considered. Most ESL practitioners feel that tests should be used in conjunction with other informal measures of language proficiency and sources of information about the student.

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[3] The chart in Chapter Eight, p. 135 can be used as a reference for determining students' levels of language proficiency and ESL instructional placements.

Again, a formal English proficiency test is only one criterion for language proficiency and placement. Districts are strongly encouraged to use multiple assessments and criteria for placement and programming.

For a listing of ESL proficiency tests available on loan from the LCAP, see Appendix G, p. 114.

2. ***Informal Assessment***

Using informal methods of assessment to determine initial classification and instructional placement for ESL students is another option for districts to explore. Certainly this is a direction that many Vermont schools are already moving in terms of assessing the language and academic skills of the general population (e.g., portfolio assessment). There is a broad-based effort of educators, parents, business people and citizens to define content and performance standards for what the public believes all students need to know and be able to do at various grade levels.

Although Vermont does not yet have content or performance standards for English as a Second Language, there are plenty of resources and materials that districts could use to develop their own informal performance-based assessments locally. Combining informal and formal proficiency assessments provides the most complete profile of a student's language skills.

In the NCBE Program Information Guide No. Nine, *Performance and Portfolio Assessment for Language Minority Students* (1992), Valdez Pierce and O'Malley define "alternative *[informal] assessment"* as follows:

> "any method of finding out what a student knows or can do that is intended to show growth and inform instruction and is not a standardized or traditional test; is by definition criterion-referenced; is authentic because it is based on activities that represent actual progress toward instructional goals and reflect tasks typical of classrooms and real-life situations; requires integration of language skills; and may include teacher observation, performance assessment, and student self-assessment."

Although informal assessments may seem best suited to monitoring progress of English language development over time in a classroom setting, there are informal methods that can also be used for the purpose of *initial identification and placement of students.*

Examples of some informal assessments that can be adapted for testing of NELB students include:

Performance Assessments
Oral Language Assessments--oral interviews, story retelling, teacher observation checklists, picture cues, oral language samples, rating scales.
Reading Assessment--cloze tests, checklists of reading behaviors, story retellings, Clay's Observation Survey: running records, concepts of print, and letter identification.
Writing Assessment--writing samples, dictations, Clay's Observation Survey: hearing sounds in words (dictations), writing vocabulary.

For sources of in-depth information about informal assessments, see Appendix G, p. 116. These assessments can provide a more holistic perspective of the student's ability to use English for social and academic purposes and may also be designed to tie in with the district curriculum. Districts with sizable numbers of ESL students may want to develop criteria for proficiency classifications and instructional levels based on their own ESL and content curriculum at the appropriate grade levels.

Designing informal assessment procedures will require more time and effort by the school staff, but may prove more satisfactory in the long run. In order for such an approach to provide reliable and valid information about the student's language proficiency, it is important that those implementing the assessment procedures reach consensus on strategies, student performance outcomes and scoring criteria for a range of grade levels.

Those developing informal assessment procedure and tests will also need to be conscious of what is culturally relevant. For example, if giving a newly arrived Vietnamese child a test using picture cues, you wouldn't show him a picture of someone on snowshoes tapping maple trees in the woods of Vermont and expect a response!

C. Assessment Personnel

A person knowledgeable about planning, administering and interpreting English language proficiency assessments should either evaluate the student or coordinate the assessment, if a team approach is used. Knowledge of linguistics, stages of second language acquisition, cultural issues and non-biased assessment, as well as training and experience in using formal English language proficiency instruments and informal assessments, are invaluable.

Districts with ESL staff members should request their assistance in planning, evaluating and interpreting assessments for initial English language classification and placement activities.

Districts without ESL qualified staff will need to seek a trained, qualified ESL evaluator who can conduct the ESL proficiency assessment. Staff without experience in assessment of ESL students, who serve on an assessment team, should receive in-service training in order to administer or interpret assessments.

II. INITIAL ASSESSMENT OF PRIMARY/HOME LANGUAGE SKILLS

Many students with limited English skills come to school with rich language backgrounds. When schools make an effort to learn about their students' life experiences and oral and literacy skills in their primary/home languages, they are able to build on already existing language skills. A student's previous knowledge and skills should never be overlooked.

A. Procedures

Whenever possible, NELB students referred for an initial assessment should also be tested in their primary/home language. The combination of a thorough identification and screening process and a native language proficiency assessment should provide a good profile of the student's primary/home language skills.

1. Newly Enrolled NELB Students

For students who have no previous exposure to English or ESL instruction, the initial assessment should *begin* with an assessment of the student's primary/home language skills, whenever possible.

Procedures recommended for assessment of language skills--listening, speaking, reading, and writing--in the primary/home language would follow similar guidelines with regard to grade level, previous schooling, history of academic difficulties, etc. as those mentioned for assessment of English language skills.

In the case of ESL students who never or only infrequently attended school in their native country, either due to age or circumstance, assessment of primary/home language may have to be limited to oral skills. [The same would apply for NELB students born in the U.S. who have never been taught to read or write in their primary/home language.]

Another important reason to assess native language skills is that it establishes useful baseline data about the student. If a school does not do a native language assessment now, it may not be possible later due to language loss. Evaluation of a student's native language proficiency should be done early, before any decline caused by lack of use. This is critical in resolving issues years later, when educators become concerned that a student may have a learning disability or language disorder. An initial native language assessment can provide crucial information for distinguishing between second language acquisition difficulties and intrinsic language disorders.

Even an informal assessment of primary/home language skills might alert educators to language or literacy gaps which could be addressed by providing an opportunity for native language support.

2. *Procedures: Previously Enrolled Students*

Previously enrolled students should also be assessed in the primary/home language if possible. This is especially important if they have been referred for an assessment due to underachievement. A student with varying levels of bilingualism has skills and knowledge in both languages. A preliminary assessment of primary/home language skills will help to determine if bilingual assessment of academic skills can be done. To really assess what bilingual students know, a comprehensive assessment is necessary.

B. Strategies/Tests

1. *Primary/Home Language Tests*

The availability of standardized and commercially developed language proficiency tests in non-English languages is very limited. More tests are available for Spanish speakers than any for other non-English languages. Finding a comprehensive test that measures skills in listening, speaking, reading, and writing at the appropriate grade level can be challenging.

It is necessary to proceed with caution when using native language proficiency tests. Sometimes tests have been normed overseas or on a population that speaks a different dialect of the language and the results may not be valid for students outside that group. Test items may include expressions or vocabulary that are not used in the student's own cultural group. There are regional and local dialects of many of the world's languages.

Nonetheless, an evaluator who knows the student's language and cultural group can be sensitive to these issues. Tests that have not been normed for the student's particular linguistic group, if used with caution, can still provide helpful *diagnostic information* about the student's native language skills.

For native language proficiency tests or source information available through the LCAP, see Assessment Resource List, Appendix G, p. 115.

2. *Informal Assessment*

Due to limited availability of primary/home language proficiency instruments, informal assessment methods may be the only viable option for assessing the skills of students from the majority of language groups represented in Vermont.

Many of the same methods listed in the previous discussion of English language proficiency informal assessment strategies can be adapted for assessing primary/home language skills. For example, a rating scale or matrix can be modified for use in assessing oral language or writing samples in non-English languages. The Boston cloze test has been translated into several different languages. Of course, all of this presumes the district is able to find a bilingual evaluator willing to learn how to administer, score and help with interpretation of these assessments.

In the absence of adequate testing instruments or bilingual evaluators, districts are still encouraged to rely as much possible on parents or interpreter/translators to help infer students' levels of reading and writing proficiency in the primary/home language from previous school records, the initial interview, or other information in the student's educational history.

Resources for Assessment, Appendix G, p. 117 gives names of books which could be helpful to those conducting informal assessments of the native languages for Spanish-speaking and Asian students.

C. Assessment Personnel

Finding experienced bilingual evaluators with the same native language and cultural background as your student will be difficult for most language groups in Vermont. While it may not always be possible to find a qualified bilingual evaluator, there are well-educated and linguistically diverse persons who can act as interpreters/translators in conducting informal assessments. Several excellent guides have been written for how to work effectively with interpreters/translators.

Call the LCAP for assistance if you are having trouble locating a native speaker of a language or would like to know more about available instruments or informal approaches.

III. INITIAL ASSESSMENT OF ACADEMIC KNOWLEDGE & SKILLS FOR INSTRUCTIONAL PLACEMENT

Assessing the academic skills of NELB students with limited proficiency in English is the most challenging aspect of the initial assessment. There are no simple tests to administer that will quickly tell you what prior content knowledge and skills students have in all the various subject areas.

Despite the difficulty of assessing academic skills, every effort should be made to determine as much as possible about the student's schooling experiences, prior knowledge, personal and academic interests. An understanding of the student's linguistic and academic skills is essential for planning an educational program.[4] It is important to recognize and build upon all students' unique talents, skills and interests.

A. Procedures

1. Newly Enrolled NELB Students

For students who are newly arrived in the country and have limited proficiency in *English*, formally assessing academic skills *in English* for placement may be impossible due to the language barrier.

However, learning about the broader context of the student's home, experiential, cultural and previous educational background can provide many informed clues to the student's academic skills. Until teachers have a chance to do some classroom-based assessment, they will need to rely primarily on interviews with their students and parents to learn about the educational backgrounds of their students. The initial screening process, including a review of available school records and a formal interview, should yield much valuable information.

If school records are not available and the formal interview did not provide sufficient information about the student's educational background, other creative approaches for gathering it may be required. For example, the evaluator(s) may try to locate a cultural informant, possibly an international student at a college or university who speaks the student's language, to interview the student or family about the educational background. Evaluators' might also use informal observation checklists to assess prior knowledge and skills in academic areas.

For newly enrolled students whose educational background or native language proficiency assessment indicate sufficient literacy and academic skills in the primary/home language, it may be possible to administer a test of basic skills in mathematics and reading in their native language with a trained bilingual evaluator. If test materials or a trained bilingual evaluator are not available for the particular language, which is often the case, the teacher could work with a bilingual interpreter/translator to do informal assessment of basic academic skills.

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[4]Students with limited schooling may have acquired valuable skills through life experience, as well.

2. *Previously enrolled NELB students*

For students with previous schooling in English in the U.S. or abroad, there are more possibilities for assessing academic skills. Step Five, monitoring of student progress, p., discusses monitoring the English language development and academic development of ESL students who have been enrolled in an ESL program and content classes. The information about procedures, strategies and tests for monitoring and determining when to exit students from ESL services is also applicable to assessment of previously enrolled NELB students. Please refer to that chapter concerning recommended performance standards and criteria. These should help in conducting a more thorough assessment of previously enrolled students to find out whether they have grade-level academic language skills and content knowledge.

Ideally, bilingual students should be assessed in both their languages in order to get a total picture of their content knowledge and skills. They may have received previous instruction in a subject area in their primary language (or possibly a third language) and be able to express their knowledge of it most articulately in that language. Anyone who has experience learning a second or foreign language knows that lack of specific vocabulary, fluency and grammatical control makes it very difficult to express ideas regardless of what you know about a subject. Therefore, assessment should be conducted in a language that provides the fairest profile of students' skills land abilities.

In addition, evaluators need to be sensitive to whether a child has *ever* been taught the subject matter being tested *in any language*. If not, the student's level of content knowledge and skills may reflect a lack of educational opportunity and not necessarily academic ability. Care must be taken to avoid confusing educational deprivation with an intrinsic learning problem.

Students who were born in the U.S. and entered school speaking a non-English language but never received formal instruction in this language, cannot be assumed to have literacy or academic skills in the primary/home language. Further information should be gathered through parent or student interviews to determine whether testing for academic skills and knowledge in the primary/home language is appropriate.

Students who have been in U.S. schools for awhile and are referred for assessment of academic skills after experiencing problems in the regular instructional program should be evaluated according to the same standards and criteria that would apply if the school were deciding whether to exit them from ESL services (Chapter Nine, p. 177). Attention should be focused on whether the student has had sufficient time and instructional opportunity to acquire academic language skills and concepts. If the student previously received sufficient and appropriate ESL instruction and academic support but is still achieving poorly, referral to an ACT 230 team or special education for more extensive testing may be necessary.

Students who score as fluent English proficient on an ESL proficiency test should also be assessed for academic skills and knowledge, unless there is satisfactory evidence that the student is doing grade-level work successfully. Depending on district policy, formal or informal methods of assessment methods can be used.

B. Strategies/Tests for Academic Skills Assessment

1. Formal Tests

Standardized norm-referenced or curriculum-referenced tests are sometimes used to measure reading/reading comprehension, math and academic achievement of NELB students who have been enrolled in ESL or mainstream classes prior to entry in the school district. However, the LCAP does not generally recommend this as a part of the *initial assessment* process unless students score as "fluent English proficient" on the ESL proficiency assessment. In such cases it may provide additional information about the student's content skills and knowledge and also whether she will be able to do grade-level work.

An alternative to using a standardized norm-referenced test of academic abilities is a test developed by Robert C. Parker for new enrollees who have received ESL services or been enrolled in English-only classrooms prior to entry into the school system. While the *"Language Proficiency Classification and Instructional Placement Instrument"* is not a test of knowledge in any specific content area, it can be used to diagnose the student's control of some academic language skills--e.g., comprehension, dictation, composition and *functional reading skills*[5]--needed in mainstream classes.

Tests are also available in some *non-English languages*, mainly Spanish, to assess academic achievement of ESL or bilingual students. See Appendix G, p. 115 for a list of academic ability tests in non-English languages. Again, formal academic achievement tests are often impractical for *purposes of initial instructional placement* due to difficulty in finding trained bilingual evaluators and materials in many languages. Many concerns have also been raised about the reliability and validity of such tests.

2. Informal Assessment

In addition to interviewing students and parents about educational experiences and curricula/systems, ESL teachers and content teachers might collaborate to develop their own informal assessments to diagnose content skills and knowledge of NELB students. Deborah Short's article, *Assessing Integrated Language and Content Instruction* in TESOL Quarterly (Winter 1993, 627-656) provides excellent background information on the topic of informal assessments. She presents an "assessment matrix" for language and content educators to use as a guide in selecting what and how to assess language and content skills.

Districts interested in finding out more about such informal assessment options can consult Chapter Nine, p. 173 and also the list of references and/or contact resource organizations for assessment, Appendix G, p. 114.

[5]The author specifically states that there are no reading comprehension activities in this test version.

C. Academic Content & Skills Assessment Personnel

Qualifications of those testing academic skills will depend on the approach and the language of assessment. Direct assessment of academic achievement in the native language should be conducted by a qualified bilingual evaluator. For more informal assessment of academic achievement, trained interpreters/translators may work in conjunction with qualified assessment specialists, ESL teachers, and content teachers.

ASSESSMENT PLAN OUTLINE

Use the checklist below to construct *a plan for implementing a comprehensive assessment system.*

SCREENING	Name/Title of Assessor(s):_____ User(s) of the Data: _____

Purpose: What we want to know	**Method(s): How we're going to find out**
•NELB background	__ •Primary/Home Language Survey completed at time of registration
•Educational history •Native language and literacy skills •Relevant family & cultural information •Personal expectations & educational goals	__ •Review of school records & available test scores __ •Formal interview with parent/guardian(s), student and interpreter, if needed
•Health or special needs	__ •Health/special needs screening

LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY CLASSIFICATION	Name/Title of Assessor(s): _____ _____ User(s) of the Data: _____

Purpose: What we want to know	**Method(s): How we're going to find out**
•English language proficiency-listening, speaking, reading and writing	__ •Formal ESL proficiency tests __ •Informal assessments (e.g. oral interviews, story retelling, writing samples, teacher/specialist observations)
•Native language proficiency	__ •Formal assessment of native language skills if tests and trained bilingual evaluator available __ •Informal assessments of native language skills

PLACEMENT	Name/Title of Assessor(s): _____ _____ User(s) of the Data: _____

Purpose: What we want to know	**Method(s): How we're going to find out**
•Prior content knowledge & skills	♦ **Newly Enrolled Students** __ •Formal student or parent interview (with interpreter, if needed) __ •Review of previous schooling records & test scores ♦ **Previously Enrolled Students** __ •Review of previous schooling records & test scores __ •Student work samples __ •Teacher made tests __ •Academic achievement tests

MONITORING PROGRESS	Name/Title of Assessor(s): _____ _____ User(s) of the Data: _____

Purpose: What we want to know	**Method(s): How we're going to find out**
•Progress in acquiring academic language & content skills while in ESL program	__ •Formal ESL proficiency test __ •Curriculum-referenced ESL test __ •Performance-based assessments of language & content skills (e.g., checklists, rating scales, matrices) __ •Samples of student work (e.g., journals, stories, tests) collected in portfolio __ •Self evaluations
•Ability to participate partially or fully in regular instructional program	__ •Formal test of academic language skills __ •Standardized, norm-referenced achievement test __ •Samples of student work (e.g., journals, stories, tests) collected in portfolio __ •ESL teacher observation (formal checklist) __ •Classroom teacher observations (formal checklist) __ •Course work grades __ •Student & parent interviews
•Successfulness of partial or full placement in regular instructional program (post (ESL) service monitoring)	__ •Teacher observations __ •Review of student work, course grades, quizzes & tests, portfolio __ •Student & parent interview
•Overall effectiveness of ESL program	__ •Program evaluation (e.g., TESOL self-study, program implementation checklists) __ •Review of student performance data

Resource Info: EAC Comprehensive Assessment Framework & Robert Parker's "A Program Process Guide"

INITIAL ASSESSMENT RECORD FORM

Student:_____ **Date of Enrollment:** _____

Primary/Home Language: _____ **Nationality:** _____

I. English Language Proficiency Assessment

A. Date(s)	**Proficiency Instrument(s) or Informal Assesements given**	**Score/ Classification**
	Listening:	
	Speaking:	
	Reading:	
	Reading Comprehension:	
	Writing:	

B. Evaluator(s):

_____

_____

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C. Results: Overall classification of English Proficiency (check the appropriate box)

- ☐ NEP (Non-English Proficiency)
- ☐ LEP (Limited English Proficiency)
  - ☐ Beginner
  - ☐ Intermediate
  - ☐ Advanced
- ☐ TEP (Transitional English Proficiency)
- ☐ FEP (Fluent English Proficiency)

Briefly describe the student's overall English language proficiency and language skills in specific areas of listening, speaking, reading and writing as indicated by formal or informal assessment.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

D. Recommended ESL Instructional Placement Level:

- ☐ Entry-Level
- ☐ Beginner
- ☐ Intermediate
- ☐ Advanced
- ☐ Transitional

Comments: _____

_____

_____

_____

II. Assessment of Primary/Home Language Proficiency		
A. Date(s)	**Proficiency Instrument(s) or Informal Assessments given**	**Score/ Classification**
	Listening:	
	Speaking:	
	Reading:	
	Reading Comprehension:	
	Writing:	

B. Evaluator(s):

_____

_____

C. Results: Summary of Student's Primary/Home Language Skills

If formal assessment instrument was used to evaluate the student's skills in the primary/home language, how would you summarize the results of the testing? i.e., would you say that the student's overall oral and written skills are at or near grade level?

_____

_____

_____

If informal assessments were given to evaluate the student's proficiency in the primary/home language, describe any observations.

_____

_____

_____

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III. Assessment of Academic Skills

A. Date	Instruments or Procedures used to assess academic skills or prior knowledge

B. Evaluator(s):

_____

_____

C. Results:

Describe anything you have learned about the student's prior knowledge and academic skills (e.g., in math, reading comprehension, or specific subject areas) through either formal or informal assessment, as appropriate.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Recommended Content Instructional Placement:

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

RESOURCES FOR ASSESSMENT

ORGANIZATIONS

EAC-East	***Evaluation Assistance Center East*** George Washington University 1730 North Lynn Street, #401 Arlington, VA 22209	TEL: 1-800-925-EACE
MRC	***New England Multifunctional Resource Center for Language and Culture*** 144 Wayland Avenue Providence, RI 02906-4384	TEL: (401) 274-9548
LCAP	***Language & Cultural Affairs Program*** Office of Rural Education 500 Dorset St. South Burlington, VT 05403	TEL: (802) 658-6342
NCBE	***National Clearinghouse for Bilingual Education*** 118 22nd Street NW Washington, DC 20037	TEL: 1-800-321-NCBE

SPECIAL EDUCATION RESOURCE

University of Texas at Austin
Bilingual Special Education Program
Department of Special Education
College of Education
Education Building 306 — TEL: (512) 471-6244
Austin, TX 78712-1290

ASSESSMENTS AVAILABLE ON LOAN FROM LANGUAGE AND CULTURAL AFFAIRS PROGRAM RESOURCE LIBRARY

Formal English as a Second Language Proficiency (ESL) Tests -

IDEA Proficiency Test (IPT & Pre-IPT)--tests listening, speaking, reading and writing skills--available for students at pre-school through high school levels.

Language Assessment Battery(LAB)--tests listening, speaking, reading and writing skills (grades K-12).

Language Assessment Scales (LAS & Pre-LAS)--tests listening, speaking, reading and writing skills--available for students at pre-school through high school levels.

Secondary Level English Proficiency Test (SLEP)--measures listening and reading comprehension for students in grades seven through twelve.

Non-Commercial English as a Second Language Proficiency Tests -

Language Proficiency Classification & Instructional Placement Instrument--tests aural-oral proficiency for social and integrative purposes; academic-cognitive language for learning with English and learning English as Content; comprehension dictation and vocabulary comprehension; composition-writing skills and functional reading.

Informal ESL Assessments

Fairfax County Public Schools ESL Assessment Guide--includes informal assessments for oral language, writing, reading, and mathematics.

The LCAP also has a collection of checklists, rating scales, matrices, and questionnaires for informal assessment of language skills.

Primary/Home Language Assessment Instruments -

Basic Elementary Skills Test (BEST)--available in Khmer and Vietnamese languages. Basic test of math computation skills, spelling, reading and writing in the primary/home language.

Bilingual Two Language Battery of Tests (English-Vietnamese) --criterion-referenced language dominance test of oral proficiency, written comprehension, initial letters and spelling, reading, listening, and writing. Administered in Vietnamese and English.

Boston Cloze Tests--available in Chinese, Vietnamese, Italian, Greek, Khmer, Laotian, French, Haitian, Spanish languages for grades 1 through 12. Tests reading comprehension skills in primary/home language.

Language Assessment Battery (Spanish Version--LAB)--tests Spanish listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills in Spanish.

Language Assessment Scales (Spanish version of LAS & Pre-LAS)--tests Spanish listening, speaking, reading and writing proficiency at elementary through secondary levels. Pre-LAS test for ages 3-5.

Spanish version of IDEA Oral Proficiency Test (IPT)--tests Spanish listening and speaking proficiency of students at elementary through secondary levels. Pre-IPT test for ages 3-5.

Tests of Basic Academic Skills

Basic Elementary Skills Test (BEST)--available in Khmer and Vietnamese languages. Basic test of math computation skills, spelling, reading and writing in the primary/home language.

Boston Cloze Tests--available in Chinese, Vietnamese, Italian, Greek, Khmer, Laotian, French, Haitian, Spanish languages for grades 1 through 12. Tests reading comprehension skills in primary/home language.

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STEP FOUR: PLACEMENT AND PROVISION OF APPROPRIATE SERVICES

INTRODUCTION

The next step involves placement in appropriate services and planning of an overall instructional program. Any student who is unable to participate fully in the regular instructional program due to limited English proficiency is entitled to placement in "direct, appropriate and sufficient services." Robert Parker, Consultant for the New England Multifunctional Resource Center, states "appropriate and sufficient services":

- focus on English proficiency and academic needs
- follow effective program and instructional practices in the field of second language education
- prepare students to perform at grade level in the content areas
- provide appropriate resources and personnel
- include multiple criteria for placement, promotion, exit, etc.
- continue until student is reclassified as fluent English proficient
- teach English and learning-with-English skills
- provide equal access to educational opportunity
- provide interaction with English-speaking peers
- document services and prove that students are succeeding

For further information about appropriate services, see Chapter 1, Legal Requirements, which includes federal and state laws, policies and guidelines.

PURPOSE

During this step in the process, the ESL Coordination Team interprets the assessment findings and information gathered through the identification and screening activities. The team then makes initial placement decisions regarding grade level, language assistance services, content area instruction, support services and counseling related to academic, cultural or social needs.

In addition to matching the services, programs and classes most appropriate to the student's instructional needs and previous background, the team shares the responsibility for periodically monitoring the placement and educational program designed for the student. Some of the team members will be involved in providing daily instructional or support services to the students, as well.

Making wise placement and programming decisions requires that members of the team be knowledgeable about a range of issues including social and cultural adjustment, stages of second language acquisition, and instructional needs of ESL students. They should be well-informed about equal access to educational programs. Also important is knowledge of various program designs for language learning and content area instruction appropriate for ESL students.

If the district already has an established ESL program or services, it is usually the ESL program coordinator or ESL teacher who organizes the team's placement and planning meetings. If the district does not have an ESL program, the team can seek information and resources from an organization which provides technical assistance and training in this area. See Appendix H, p. 159, Resources for Language Development Programs.

At the elementary level, the relevant classroom teacher should be on the team and at the middle and high school level, the guidance counselor. Since students at the middle and high school levels have many different teachers, it is important to involve the guidance counselor in placement and programming decisions. The guidance counselor and the ESL teacher act as liaisons with the relevant teachers and school personnel.

INSTRUCTIONAL PLACEMENT AND PLANNING PROCEDURES

There are six basic steps involved in the instructional placement and planning process:

1. Make temporary placement prior to completion of initial assessment
2. Review screening information and assessment results--consider placement and programming options
3. Develop Individualized Instructional Plan (IIP)
4. Notify parent/guardian(s) of assessment findings and placement/programming decisions
5. Document all placement decisions in student's file
6. Make initial placement and monitor--modify if needed

1. Make temporary placement prior to completion of initial assessment

Because it takes time to complete the initial assessment and placement activities, newly enrolled NELB students may have to be placed temporarily in the mainstream classroom (elementary level) or appropriate courses (middle/secondary level) until a specially designed program can be worked out.

If the school has existing ESL services, the ESL teacher helps in welcoming and orienting newly arriving students. A temporary schedule that accommodates the student's early adjustment needs should be arranged. A more structured program will be set up following the assessment.

If a district does not have previously existing ESL services, other school personnel will need to try to accommodate the student's immediate needs until an appropriate educational program can be set up.

School staff should be especially sensitive to students' initial anxiety about being in a new school and possibly a new country. Planning and program decisions should be made in a timely fashion, so that new students who do not know the language and culture are not left sitting in classrooms, libraries and study halls without instructional support and services.

Some suggestions for making students more comfortable during this transition period can be found on p. 124.

2. Review screening information and assessment results -- consider placement and programming options

After the evaluator(s) complete the initial assessment for classification and placement, the ESL Coordination Team meets to review assessment results and screening information and consider the best placement and programming options for the student.

The team bases its placement and programming decisions on the student's language proficiency classification and instructional needs. Sources of information about the student's language and instructional needs are:

- Primary/home language survey or teacher referral completed during identification;
- Existing school records--grades, courses, test scores, content and grade levels completed during previous schooling;
- Information from student, parent/guardian(s) during formal interview--screening form detailing educational, experiential, language and cultural background;
- Results and observations of all assessments of English language and literacy necessary for success in the regular instructional program, as well as academic and native language and literacy skills, when possible;
- Documentation of health and special needs;

Check the schools records, Screening Form, and the Initial Assessment Record Form for documentation of the above information.

If the assessment and screening information indicate that the student has fluent English proficiency and has a proven record of doing grade-level work successfully, the student is placed at the appropriate grade level without support services. The student is monitored to make sure that this initial placement is correct.[1]

[1]All initial placements should be considered tentative. If a student is struggling in classes, changes in support services or placement should be made. The team promptly re-evaluates the placement and recommends changes or needed support services.

3. Develop Individualized Instructional Plan (IIP)

If the language proficiency assessment indicates the student does not have fluent English proficiency and probably will not be able to do grade level work, the team determines an appropriate placement and support services. (Specific guidelines and resources for placement and provision of appropriate instructional and support services can be found on p. 124). The team uses an ***Individualized Instructional Plan (IIP)*** for planning and documenting an appropriate educational program at the student's grade level. See Appendix H, p. 150 for a sample IIP form. It recommends appropriate:

- grade level placement;
- language assistance program and ESL instructional placement (based on proficiency level) to help the student understand, speak, read and write English at an appropriate grade level;
- content area instruction and academic support services to help the student gain academic concepts and skills to do grade-level work;
- health/special needs services or referrals, if needed;
- counseling and cultural support services to integrate students into the school and community, as well as incorporate their language and cultural identity;
- adjunct and supplemental services.

The plan also specifies the program schedule and responsible instructional staff. If the school has never served ESL students before, the team may need to make recommendations to a district administrative team regarding staff, resources, materials and in-service training.

The ESL Coordination Team completes the basic recommendations. The staff providing direct instruction to the student fill in the details of the student's educational program, (e.g., instructional approaches, methods and learning activities to teach language and content, curriculum objectives, etc.).

4. Notify parent/guardian(s) of assessment findings and placement/programming decisions

Once the ESL Coordination Team has reviewed the assessment findings and come up with initial recommendations for placement and programming, it notifies the parent/guardian(s). If not already done during an earlier formal interview, the team also informs the parent/guardian(s) of the educational rights and program options for their child. District procedures for assessment and placement of students are also explained to them again if needed. They are given the opportunity to discuss these rights and options with school staff, if they so desire. The team arranges for interpreter services, if necessary.

5. Document all placement decisions in student's file

The team checks to make sure all information about the placement and programming is documented in the student's file for future use in program planning and in meeting local and state reporting procedures.

As part of its data collection responsibilities, the Language & Cultural Affairs Program conducts an annual Student Update for the purpose of documenting the state's population of ESL students and educational services provided. See Appendix H, p. 156 for copy of the **Student Update Form** which districts are requested to complete yearly for each enrolled NELB student.

Data which districts are requested to maintain for state and federal reporting purposes include: methods used to determine limited English proficiency; types of language assistance and other instructional programs in which students are enrolled; the educational performance of ESL students in subject areas such as math, science, reading, and other areas; test scores; grade retention and student drop out rates.

This information is helpful on the local, state and federal level for evaluating the current educational services for ESL students and planning activities to improve the effectiveness of programs for them.

6. Make initial placement and monitor -- modify if needed

The ESL Coordination Team provides the student's ESL and classroom teacher(s) with relevant screening and assessment findings and a copy of the student's Individualized Instructional Plan.

The team collectively shares the responsibility for meeting periodically to review the student's progress in learning the language and content required for grade-level work. They suggest appropriate instructional and assessment activities. It is recommended that the IIP be updated each quarter. Any changes in ESL services are determined by the ESL coordinator and ESL Coordination Team members and recorded on the IIP form (Parker, 1993).

GUIDELINES AND RESOURCES FOR PLACEMENT AND PROVISION OF APPROPRIATE INSTRUCTIONAL AND SUPPORT SERVICES

The following guidelines and references are provided for those involved in making initial placement and programming decisions about the student. These guidelines focus on four areas:

- Grade Placement
- Transition Period
- Equal Educational Opportunity (Equal Access)
- Appropriate Instructional and Support Services for ESL students.

Appropriate Grade Placement

In general, ESL students should be placed at the grade level that corresponds to chronological age. They need to interact socially with their peers for both affective and cognitive reasons. Even though it may take years before they can be expected to perform grade-level work in some academic subjects, retaining or placing ESL students at lower grade levels as a strategy to help them learn English is not recommended. Acquisition of academic language skills necessary for full participation in content classes can take as long as 5-7 years for second language learners (Cummins, 1981).

The whole purpose of planning an individualized program is to ensure that ESL students receive appropriate and sufficient ESL and academic support services at whatever grade level they are placed. Individualizing instruction to the student's needs and learning how to integrate language and content instruction are important skills for both classroom and ESL teachers working with ESL students.

For students who enter high school with limited previous schooling and aspire to getting a diploma, the most realistic option might be to do long-term planning to make sure they have an opportunity to complete required and elective courses. Many ESL students have accomplished this in Vermont schools with help from guidance counselors and supportive teachers in making sure that academic requirements were met on schedule. Some schools have also allowed students to do a fifth year at the high school level.

Transition Period

Prior to completion of the identification, screening, assessment, and placement activities, it may be necessary to place the student temporarily in classes with teachers who have had little or no experience working with this population. Understandably, having a student in class who cannot understand or participate can create anxiety and confusion for both the teacher and the student. Therefore, it is helpful if the district develops a plan for how it will handle newly arriving ESL students during this transitional period.

Perhaps more important than worrying about language and academic instruction during these early days of transition is to focus on helping ESL students feel welcome and comfortable in the new cultural surroundings and school setting. Initially, students may experience a great deal of "culture shock" and may be too overwhelmed to concentrate on content learning. Teachers should expect this initial adjustment period; often the student will be very silent or shy.

Providing the student with basic orientation to the school and community will be one of the most valuable endeavors at this time. For a list of some of the topics that new arrivals and other ESL students eventually need to know about, see *What All ESL Students Should Know* (Maine Department of Education, 1991), Appendix H, p. 159.

One of the most effective ways of making students feel welcome and accepted is to implement some type of a *buddy system*. In some schools this is common practice with all students. Peers are often able to communicate and teach other children very well, although they may need supervision and a basic introduction to cross-cultural communication and ESL techniques.

Other possibilities for smoothing the student's transition are: pair the student with another who speaks the same language and comes from the same cultural background; invite community members of the same ethnicity to volunteer until the student feels more comfortable.

A few resource materials available from the LCAP which might stimulate school staff's creativity and lessen anxiety during this initial transition period for newly arrived students include:

Law, B., & Eckes, M. (1991). *The More Than Just Surviving! Handbook: ESL for Every Classroom Teacher* Winnipeg: Pequis Publishers.

Coelho, E. (1994). Social integration of immigrant and refugee children. In Genesee, F. (Ed.). *Educating Second Language Children: The Whole Child, The Whole Curriculum, The Whole Community* (pp. 301-327). Port Chester, NY: Cambridge University Press.

Interface Network, Inc. (1987). *First Experiences [Video]. Classrooms without Borders Series.* Portland, Oregon: Author.

Equal Access to All Educational Programs

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act guarantees all students, regardless of limited English proficiency, national origin, race or gender, equal access to all educational programs--academic, vocational, gifted and talented, computer, compensatory and special education.

The May 1970 Office for Civil Rights memo reaffirmed this right and further stated where a language barrier exists, a school "must take affirmative steps to rectify the language deficiency in order to open its instructional program to students who are unable to speak and understand the English language."

The memo also states that "any ability grouping or tracking system employed by the school system to deal with the special language skill needs of LEP students must be designed to meet such language skill needs as soon as possible and must not operate as an educational dead-end or permanent track." Schools should not place ESL students in lower ability groups, vocational classes or special education classes, solely on the basis of language proficiency. If the school tracks students into certain programs or classes, it must convincingly show how this prepares them to participate in the school's other instructional programs.

Schools are required to provide a full-day instructional program for any legal resident. Section 1075 of Title 16 of V.S.A. states that the legal residence of a migrant, immigrant or refugee child shall be determined in the same manner as for a child of homeless parents, i.e., §(c), "the legal residence of a child of homeless parents is where the child temporarily resides unless the parents and another school district agree that the child's attendance in school in that school district will be in the best interest of the child in that continuity of education will be provided and transportation will not be unduly burdensome to the school district."

The law requires that all resident children between the ages of seven and sixteen enroll in a "public day school during the time it is in session." (Vermont Compulsory Attendance Law). This means that even if parents come to enroll a child in the last week of school, the child must be enrolled and the process of identifying, prescreening, and assessing the student begun.

Appropriate Instructional and Support Services

This section describes various program options for direct instruction and support services for ESL students. References are provided for materials and resource organizations, which can assist districts in developing or enhancing services.

Special instructional and support services are essential for schools to integrate students from other language, cultural and educational backgrounds into the regular educational program. Successful implementation of these services requires that responsibility be shared by school staff, rather than assigned to one person in a school. ESL teachers, counselors, classroom teachers and specialists all contribute to the education of ESL students.

ESL students represent a wide range of abilities, educational experiences, English and native language/literacy skills, content knowledge, social and cultural backgrounds. These variables will affect the type of instructional approach and methods, program design, scheduling and duration of services to be provided. Districts need to be flexible in their programming to accommodate individual differences.

Depending on the grade level of the student, the areas of placement and programming which the ESL Coordination Team needs to address in planning appropriate services include:

I. *alternative language instructional program;*

II. *content area instruction;*

III. *acculturation and counseling services;*

IV. *vocational instruction;*

V. *health/special needs;*

VI. *adjunct support services.*

The remainder of this section will discuss these program options in more detail. Listings of resources are provided at the end of the chapter for readers wanting more information.

I. Alternative Language Instructional Program

The most immediate challenge for ESL students is to develop the English skills they need to participate successfully in social and academic settings. In order to adjust socially and do grade-level work students will need listening, speaking, reading, writing and study skills.

Under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act, districts must provide an appropriate program for any student with a language barrier impeding full participation in the regular instructional program. One aspect of this program is an *alternative language program* to help ESL students learn English.

Districts are free to choose their own program model for teaching ESL students as long as it is "recognized as sound by some *experts* in the field [of second language education] or is considered [by experts] a legitimate experimental strategy."

Program models which are specially designed to teach ESL students English language and/or content skills for grade-level work can generally be grouped into broad categories: English as a Second Language (ESL) program models; bilingual program models; and other program models which provide neither *explicit* instruction in the native language nor *direct* instruction in ESL--i.e. content-based language programs and structured immersion programs.

There are several variations within each category of program models. Since variations of the *ESL model* are the most realistic option for the majority of Vermont schools, issues of ESL program design, staffing, instructional approaches, scheduling, etc. are discussed in more detail here. Bilingual programs are discussed only briefly due to the fact that few districts have a large enough number of students from the same language background to make such programs feasible. Resources are listed at the back of the section for those districts that might qualify for federal funding and want more information.

Content-based language programs are mentioned under both the ESL and the content area instruction sections of this chapter.

A. English as a Second Language (ESL) instruction

In the 1992 *TESOL Statement on the Role of Bilingual Education in the Education of Children in the United States*, ESL is described as follows:

- Monolingual English instruction, using ESL teaching approaches, methods and activities to teach social and academic language skills (listening, speaking, reading, writing, and higher-order thinking) to students of varying proficiency levels;

- Often, ESL students are also taught basic content area concepts using ESL techniques, in order to prepare them for integration into the regular classroom.

Typical objectives of ESL programs are articulated in the TESOL publication ***All things to All People*** (Flemming, D.N., Germer, L.C., & Kelley, C. 1993):

1. To develop the English language proficiency of the students to a level at which they understand and are understood in common social and academic settings. This proficiency includes satisfactory pronunciation and intonation, adequate control of vocabulary, and sufficient grammatical accuracy to prevent miscommunication;

2. To develop a control of basic concepts that will allow for learning in the content areas: language arts, social studies, science, and math;

3. To facilitate the socialization and acculturation process by integrating language minority students and their English-speaking peers into extracurricular activities;

4. To integrate language minority students into the mainstream classroom program. This process is gradual and does not necessarily move at the same rate in each content area for each individual;

5. To develop the learning strategies and classroom behaviors that are necessary for academic success in the U.S. public school system.

*1. **Rationale**--* A structured daily ESL program is an essential and integral component of an ESL student's educational program. Most ESL students coming to Vermont do not have the benefit of bilingual programs to help them learn content in their primary/home language while they are in the process of learning English. They are often placed in monolingual content classes immediately upon enrollment. The "submersion approach" of placing ESL students directly in classes, without providing language and academic assistance, is not a legitimate program option.[2]

ESL students need a structured ESL program with a sequenced curriculum to develop and refine listening comprehension, oral expression, reading/writing, and thinking skills appropriate for grade-level academic work. Exemplary ESL programs also incorporate language and cultural aspects of students' backgrounds into meaningful language learning experiences and apply ESL techniques to content areas taught through English. Sometimes native-language support is available in an ESL program (TESOL, 1992).

[2]Language Arts and English classes are not a substitute for ESL instruction or other program models. They are geared toward students who already have a high level of proficiency in the English language and focus on grammar, literature, and advanced language development. While the subject matter in these classes is important for ESL students, they must first learn more basic language skills through a communicative approach.

2. ***Program Design***--Some of the common types of English as a Second Language instructional programs include:

- ***English as a Second Language (ESL) pull-out tutorial model***--ESL instruction is provided to individual students or small groups of ESL students in an instructional space away from the regular classroom. Students are usually grouped according to language proficiency and grade level;

- ***In-class ESL instruction ("inclusionary")***--Small groups of students receive instruction by the ESL teacher (and sometimes the classroom teacher in a team teaching version) in the regular classroom;

- ***Class Period ESL***--ESL instruction is provided during a scheduled class period in a self-contained ESL classroom for a group of students often according to their level of English proficiency. Usually at the middle and high school levels, students are awarded English credits[3].

- ***High intensity language training (HILT)***--Students receive intensive ESL instruction in a self-contained ESL classroom or ESL resource center (at least 2 periods a day). They are often grouped according to grade or language proficiency level. Instruction usually includes "sheltered content" and adjunct academic support (e.g., tutoring), as well;

- ***Content-based ESL***--ESL students are grouped together for content-based language instruction. Language teachers use content topics e.g., science, social studies, rather than grammar or vocabulary lists, to develop students' language skills for academic participation. ESL instructional strategies are used to make content comprehensible (Rennie, 1993).

- ***Newcomer Model***--Special schools or classes designated specifically for beginning level or very low proficiency level students. This model can use ESL, bilingual or structured immersion approaches. Students usually spend 6 months to a year in a newcomer center preparing for transition to more advanced levels of ESL and content classes.

3. ***Staff/Training***--At present Vermont has no specific licensure requirements for those teaching and/or coordinating alternative language (ESL) programs. However, federal and state policies address staffing and training requirements. Salient points are discussed below.

The number of staff that will be needed to carry out the district's alternative language program will obviously vary depending on ESL student demographics and the type of program chosen.

a. ESL Teacher

The ESL specialist plays a key role in providing language instruction, support for academic work and acculturation, consulting with mainstream teachers, coordinating services to ESL students and establishing a relationship between families and schools. Often ESL teachers take

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[3]Credits toward high school graduation should be granted for ESL courses at the secondary level, regardless of the type of program. The ESL Coordination Team and appropriate administrators determine how many credits are allotted for ESL coursework.

responsibility for assessment, placement, program planning and delivery of services to ESL students. Districts should give considerable thought to the reality of serving ESL students and make sure that they hire appropriately qualified teachers to meet varied responsibilities.

For more delineation of the ESL teacher's role, desirable personal qualities, professional competencies and experience, see references listed in Appendix H, p. 162 under Staff/Training.

Although the state of Vermont has no licensure requirement for teachers of ESL, a proposal for licensure has been submitted to the Professional Standards Board and awaits further action. In the meantime, the Office for Civil Rights' September 1991 *Policy Update on Schools' Obligations Toward National Origin Minority Students with Limited English Proficiency* and Commissioner Mills' 1991 memo regarding *The Education of Limited English Proficient Students* should guide districts in staffing language assistance programs.

These policies state that districts "must provide the teachers and resources necessary for the program to succeed. The program's teachers must have received adequate training in the specific teaching methods required by that program." If the alternative language program chosen is an ESL program, the district is expected to hire people with training and experience in ESL, whenever possible.

"This training can take the form of in-service training, formal college coursework, or a combination of the two. The district should ensure, through testing and classroom observation, that teachers have actually mastered the skills necessary to teach in the program successfully" (OCR Policy).

Districts that do not have qualified ESL instructors on staff should advertise and interview prospective candidates. Many districts succeed in finding qualified ESL specialists through advertising in local newspapers despite initial skepticism about being able to find ESL teachers in rural areas.

In cases where the district shows that it has unsuccessfully tried to hire qualified teachers and can describe the efforts it has made, OCR policy states that "the district must require its teacher(s) to work toward obtaining formal qualifications. In addition, the district must ensure that those teachers receive sufficient interim training to enable them to function adequately in the classroom, as well as any assistance they may need from bilingual aides that may be necessary to carry out the district's interim program."

Experienced ESL instructors, like other professional staff, should be given opportunities for professional development in their field of ESL and education in general. This can take many forms, including participation in conferences and seminars, observing other teachers, sharing meetings with other ESL teachers and accessing teacher training materials/resources available through professional associations. For ideas on possible workshop topics for "seasoned ESL instructors", see Parker, R. (1993), Training Activities for Standard Curriculum and ESL Instructional and Administrative Staff. *Designing an Educational Program for Low-Incidence Numbers of Limited English Proficient Students*, (pp. 99-103).

The LCAP assists schools with staff development through consultations, workshops, and conferences. It also provides technical assistance and coaching to ESL teachers. However, this support is not meant to replace more formal study or training required of novice ESL teachers.

For other organizations providing training for teachers, see Appendix H, p. 160. Interested school staff should contact these organizations directly to find out how they can learn of professional conferences, institutes, workshops, and conventions. Many of these organizations also have newsletters, journals and teacher reference or instructional publications.

Finally, ESL professionals might want to participate in *Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages in Vermont (TESOLVE)* as a way to share ideas, materials, and resources.

b. Program Coordinator

In districts with only small numbers of ESL students, the ESL teacher may provide direct services to students and also coordinate administrative tasks, e.g. ensuring procedures for identification, assessment, placement and monitoring of students are implemented.

Districts with larger enrollments of ESL students[4] should have an ESL coordinator who assumes organizational and administrative duties. In districts with growing numbers of ESL students who have never had ESL services before, ESL teachers often find themselves in the position of organizing a program from scratch. Doing this in addition to performing teaching duties can cause burn-out and affect the ESL program and students adversely. Districts might hire such as a person as a part-time teacher and part-time ESL coordinator in order to recognize their dual contributions. In such cases, additional part-time ESL staff may be needed to provide students with *sufficient* ESL instruction.

Providing appropriate educational services and programs for increasing numbers of ESL students with diverse needs, backgrounds and abilities at different schools and grade levels is no small task. Some of the responsibilities include: developing appropriate policies and procedures; providing technical assistance and coaching to ESL and classroom teachers and administrators; coordinating ongoing staff development and training; promoting parent involvement; arranging translation/interpretation services; selecting resources and materials; hiring and supervising ESL teachers; working with on-site ESL Coordination Teams.

For the purposes of program development and staff training, the ESL Coordinator should have training and experience in ESL. Many programmatic choices require an in-depth understanding of second language education, student characteristics, instructional approaches, program models, etc. Organizational and leadership skills will also be invaluable.

For a more complete listing of tasks, roles and responsibilities of an ESL coordinator, see Parker, R. (1993) *A Program Process Guide For Educators Meeting the Educational Needs of Linguistic Minority Students*, (pp. 41-47).

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[4] "High incidence programs usually have enrollments of 20 or more from one non-English language group enrolled in a school district. Or there may be 20 or more students from numerous language groups enrolled across the school district" (Parker, 1993, 7).

4. ESL Instructional Approaches/Methods--ESL teachers use instructional approaches, methods and activities which are appropriate to various grade and language proficiency levels. They should be based on current research and practices proven to be effective with ESL learners. Whenever districts find that ESL students are not succeeding in overcoming the language barriers, teachers should examine their instructional approaches and modify them as needed.

Some current ESL instructional practices are designed specifically for teaching students a second language (e.g. Content based ESL, Communicative Language Teaching, The Natural Approach, Total Physical Response), while others are based on instructional practices used by many regular classroom teachers (e.g., Whole Language, Cooperative Learning, Language Experience, Process Writing). Although some of the instructional approaches that work well with monolingual English-speaking children also work well with ESL children, they still must be adapted to be effective for second language learners.

ESL teachers develop their ESL students' basic language skills and also prepare them to participate effectively in other areas of the curriculum. They need to know how to "shelter content". Using ESL instructional practices to integrate the teaching of language and content skills has become a popular instructional approach in many ESL/bilingual programs. In a content-based ESL instructional approach, ESL or classroom teachers understand second language acquisition and apply ESL techniques to teach vocabulary, concepts and skills related to specific content area subjects. This approach is especially relevant for intermediate, advanced and transitional level students.

Another approach designed to help high beginner and intermediate level students bridge the gap between ESL and content area classes is the *Cognitive Academic Language Learning Approach (CALLA)* developed by Anna Uhl Chamot and J. Michael O'Malley. See Appendix H, p. 163 for more information.

5. Curriculum--A goal of districts should be to work toward development of a sequenced ESL curriculum which states specific performance outcomes or standards for various grade and language proficiency instructional levels. Such a curriculum would correlate to the district curriculum. Obviously, this is a labor-intensive process and requires the commitment and input of district ESL, curriculum and the regular instructional program personnel.

In designing an integrated language and content curriculum for students, teachers and curriculum specialists need to create goals, objectives and learning activities that develop *basic interpersonal communication skills* (BICS)--i.e., linguistic proficiency, social language forms and *cognitive academic language proficiency* (CALP)--i.e., critical skills in all language domains (listening, speaking, reading, writing), affective skills and attitudes, thinking skills, study skills and knowledge of the culture.

In addition to helping their students attain BICS and CALP, ESL teachers work with classroom teachers to prepare them to function effectively in the regular instructional program.[5] It is recommended that ESL teachers and classroom teachers collaborate to prioritize or identify topics and themes from the content areas for integration of language and content instruction.

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[5]Their job is to teach language and content skills, not to help students complete assignments for other classes or tutor in academic subjects.

They also share resources and techniques. Classroom teachers and ESL teachers together identify skills and concepts appropriate to grade and language proficiency levels and learning styles of their ESL students. In the inclusionary ESL program model, the ESL teacher and the classroom teacher may actually team-teach some lessons and activities. Appendix H, p. 154. gives suggestions for ways that ESL and classroom teachers can work together.

6. ESL Materials--Another aspect of equal educational opportunity is providing ESL students with appropriate and sufficient materials and resources. This means that districts make a commitment to obtaining quality materials designed to teach ESL students language and content in alternative language programs.

Appropriate materials enable ESL students to understand concepts and are written for their language proficiency level. These materials should be selected to match the student's age/grade level, special interests and cultural background as much as possible.

Because students are developing their English language skills, they require dictionaries, reading materials, content texts and computer programs that are written or designed to meet the needs of second language learners. Materials written for native speakers may be too challenging at this point.

The LCAP maintains a bibliography of ESL instructional, curriculum, software, teacher training, multicultural, and audiovisual materials, as well as copies of catalogs from publishers of these ESL materials. Interested districts can request a copy. School personnel are welcome to visit the resource library and borrow materials for examination purposes before purchasing them for their own districts.

7. Schedule of ESL Instruction--The ESL Coordination Team schedules ESL instruction according to a range of student variables and available program options. Scheduling decisions will need to be made about the amount of time allocated for direct service, who will provide ESL instruction and where it will be provided. These decisions should be made on a case-by-case basis.

The findings of the formal interview and the diagnostic assessment of the student's language proficiency level and academic skills provide the basis for determining the ESL instructional placement, time allotment and focus of services.

In general, the lower the student's proficiency level, the more intensive the ESL program should be. A more intensive program at the beginning helps students progress faster and ultimately speeds up the partial or full mainstreaming into content area classes. This is especially critical in schools, where there is no opportunity for ESL students to receive content instruction in their primary language while they learn English.

The assessment of the student's English language proficiency should indicate a *classification of proficiency* and the *ESL instructional level*. Formal and informal assessments are given in order to classify the student's language proficiency according to: non-English proficiency (NEP), limited English proficiency (LEP), transitional English proficiency, (TEP) and fluent English proficiency (FEP). The assessments should also establish the students ESL instructional placement level, e.g., Entry-level, Beginner, Intermediate, Advanced, Transitional, and Fluent.

Using the classifications and instructional levels, the following allotments of ESL instructional time are recommended:[6]

English Language Proficiency Classification	ESL Instructional Level	Identifying Characteristics	Recommended Time Allotment
NEP	Entry-level	• No comprehension, verbal production or reading/writing skills in English	2-4 hours daily
LEP	Beginner	• Limited comprehension • Speech limited to isolated words & simple phrases • No or minimal reading & writing skills	2-4 hours daily
	Intermediate	• Improving comprehension of everyday speech and increased fluency, vocabulary and grammatical control • Very limited ability to understand classroom discourse and read/write in English for academic purposes	1-2 hours daily
	Advanced	• Good conversational skills • Still lacks control of academic language • Requires support in content area classes	1-2 hours daily
TEP	Transitional	• Excellent conversational skills • Level of academic language not yet at full potential or comparable to peers • Expanding listening, reading/writing, thinking skills for grade-level academic work	1 hour daily or as needed, to provide support for academic classes
FEP	Monitoring of student progress in regular instructional program	• Excellent control of social and academic language • Grade appropriate reading & writing skills	Monitor progress in the regular instructional program for three years

Adapted from Robert Parker's "Proficiency Classification and Descriptions in Language Proficiency Classification and Instructional Placement Instrument" (1993).

[6]These are *broad* recommendations. Actual time allotments will depend on age, grade, oral and literacy skills in the native language, and educational background.

When developing an Individual Instructional Plan for a student, the scheduling of ESL instruction should be given a high priority. Without sufficient time allotted to developing English language skills and academic language proficiency, ESL students will progress more slowly in content areas. ESL should be seen as pivotal, not as peripheral, to the curriculum. Of course, it is important to consider the amount of time a student spends in ESL to make sure he meets specific course and credit requirements for graduation. ESL students will see ESL instruction as being important, only if the school staff treats it as an important subject area.

8. Grouping--In addition to deciding how much ESL instruction to provide individual students, schools with several students close in grade level should consider grouping students for instruction. Schools with larger numbers of ESL students often establish ESL instructional proficiency levels and performance outcomes in order to group students for instruction.

Grouping students to teach language and content skills takes forethought and planning. It also requires skilled ESL teachers, since they must be able to manage a variety of group sizes with students from different grade and possibly language proficiency levels, literacy levels, learning styles, educational, language and cultural backgrounds.

ESL classes typically work well when the number of students is no more than ten to fifteen. This allows the teacher to individualize instruction to meet the different linguistic and academic needs of students. Students are generally close in age/grade level (no more than a three grade level span) and have similar levels of English language proficiency. Heterogenous grouping (mixed proficiency levels) in the ESL class can, if done properly, also provide an opportunity for group language learning activities and peer interaction that is not possible in more homogenous groupings or one-on-one tutorial situations.

Of course, there are situations where one-on-one instruction in ESL is still the best option. In many schools there are only a few children, who are at extremely different grade or language proficiency levels. Grouping siblings sometimes does not work well due to family dynamics.

Grouping students with big discrepancies in the amount of previous schooling is not advised either. Students with limited schooling and native language competence cannot be expected to keep pace with students from well-educated backgrounds, particularly at the secondary level. Organizing special classes or support services for students with little education and low level literacy skills is the best way to give them a fair chance.

ESL students often come from very different linguistic and cultural backgrounds. They may also have very different learning styles and cultural attitudes about education. ESL teachers and classroom teachers with students from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds need to be aware of such differences without stereotyping. They will have

to be creative about finding ways to get students with a variety of learning styles to work together in the classroom. Although it is important to recognize that learning styles can vary within cultural groups, research has shown that cultures and schools tend to promote some learning styles over others. For an excellent discussion of learning styles and culture, see *Teaching Language Minority Students in the Multi-Cultural Classroom* by Robin Scarcella (1990).

B. Bilingual Programs

The following description of bilingual program models is excerpted from the *ERIC Digest* on *ESL and Bilingual Program Models* by Jeanne Rennie with permission from the ERIC Clearinghouse on Languages and Linguistics.

"All bilingual program models use the students' home language, in addition to English, for instruction. These programs are most easily implemented in districts with a large number of students from the same language background. Students in bilingual programs are grouped according to their first language, and teachers must be proficient in both English and the students' home language.

Early-exit bilingual programs are designed to help children acquire the English skills required to succeed in an English-only mainstream classroom. These programs provide some initial instruction in the students' first language, primarily for the introduction of reading, but also for clarification. Instruction in the first language is phased out rapidly, with most students mainstreamed by the end of first or second grade. The choice of an early-exit model may reflect community or parental preference, or it may be the only bilingual program option available in districts with a limited number of bilingual teachers.

Late-exit programs differ from early-exit programs 'primarily in the amount and duration that English is used for instruction as well as the length of time students are to participate in each program' (Ramirez, Yuen, & Ramey, 1991). Students remain in late-exit programs throughout elementary school and continue to receive 40% or more of their instruction in their first language, even when they have been reclassified as fluent-English-proficient.

Two-way bilingual programs, also called developmental bilingual programs, group language minority students from a single language background in the same classroom with language majority (English-speaking) students. Ideally, there is a nearly 50/50 balance between language minority and language majority students. Instruction is provided in both English and the minority language. In some programs, the languages are used on alternating days. Others may alternate morning and afternoon, or they may divide the use of the two languages by academic subject. Native English speakers and speakers of another language have the opportunity to acquire proficiency in a second language while continuing to develop their native language skills. Students serve as native-speaker role models for their peers. Two-way bilingual classes may be taught by a single teacher who is proficient in both languages or by two teachers, one of whom is bilingual."

An advantage of adequately funded and staffed bilingual programs is that students can continue their academic development in the native language while they are acquiring English language skills to do grade-level work in the regular instructional program. Exemplary bilingual programs reinforce students' bilingual and cultural skills and recognize the worth of all cultural and linguistic backgrounds.

Several school districts in Vermont have had bilingual programs in the past. Those with large numbers of ESL students from the same language background and an interest in bilingual program models should either contact the Office of Bilingual Education and Minority Language Affairs (OBEMLA) or a Title VII Bilingual Education consultant at the LCAP. See Appendix H, p. 161. Information is available on federal funding for the education of ESL students at the elementary and secondary levels. These offices can also provide information about other program options including: emergency immigrant education funds; special alternative instructional programs (SAIPs) designed to help students learn primarily through English; family English literacy programs; and special populations programs for bilingual preschool, special education, and gifted and talented students.

II. Content Area Instruction

To prevent ESL students from falling further and further behind in the academic curriculum while they are learning English, the ESL Coordination Team cannot wait until the student has completed a language development program to address content instructional needs. ESL students have a right to a full educational program which includes access to content area instruction. Access means that content area instruction is provided in a way that ESL students can comprehend and actively participate.

A. Rationale-- ESL students find it impossible to interact and participate *fully* in content area classes for various reasons. Different schooling experiences, cultural differences, or lack of previous education or literacy skills can all affect educational performance.

Team members must realize that ESL students may not be able to cope with the demands of some content area classes. Teaching styles and curricula may be structured very differently in their home country. Some subjects required in the U.S., e.g., American history or literature, are not taught in other countries and contain many new and unfamiliar topics and concepts.

The most common impediment to interacting and participating fully in content classes for ESL students is language. Districts that do not have screening and assessment procedures in place often assume that students who are conversationally fluent are capable of being fully mainstreamed. In reality, many students with impressive conversational skills have not had adequate time or opportunity to acquire the academic language proficiency and skills that will be expected of them in language arts, science, social studies and other content area classes.

Considerable research has been done to study the acquisition of a second language and its impact on academic achievement. Perhaps best known is the work of Jim Cummins, Ontario Institute for Studies in Education. He distinguishes between ***basic interpersonal communication skills (BICS)*** and ***cognitive academic language proficiency (CALP)***. He also shows how BICS are not sufficient to ensure a student's success in content courses. In order to perform more cognitively demanding, context-reduced classroom tasks, e.g., comprehending and participating in classroom discussion, reading textbooks and other curriculum materials, writing competently at the appropriate grade level, students also need to have CALP.

Since the process of acquiring cognitive academic language proficiency can take as long as five to seven years (Cummins, 1981) for many ESL students, language and content instruction obviously need to be integrated for optimal learning.

B. Placement and Programming Decisions for Content Area Instruction

Decisions concerning placement in the regular instructional program require that the team be very familiar with mainstreaming procedures. Step Six: Monitoring Student Progress, Chapter Nine, discusses procedures and criteria for determining when to exit students from special language services and place them in the regular instructional program. These same criteria and procedures apply to *initial placement* of students in mainstream classes.

In planning a content area instructional program, the first question the team needs to consider is whether the student can be fully mainstreamed in the regular instructional program. If the results of various screening and assessments show that the student is fully English proficient and able to meet the linguistic and cognitive demands of the regular classroom without special language or academic support services, then the student is mainstreamed at the appropriate grade level. The placement of new students should be monitored closely, in case the student encounters difficulty and changes need to be made.

If the student does not meet criteria for full mainstreaming in the regular instructional program, the team next asks the question whether the student can be partially mainstreamed. *Partial mainstreaming* means that the student is placed in carefully selected classes for part of the day and attends ESL and other special content instruction classes for the remainder of the day. ESL students who are partially mainstreamed require instructional modifications, appropriate materials, and possibly special tutoring to participate fully in class.

Placing ESL students in classes such as art, music and physical education provides them an opportunity to interact with peers socially and also learn through a variety of concrete, interactive activities which usually require less academic language proficiency. Some students may excel in these classes which can motivate them to learn the language faster. It is also important to remember that even in less "academic" subject areas, instructional modifications may be necessary.

Selecting content courses for ESL students requires considerable thought. In the ideal situation, students are only placed in content classes when there is relative certainty that they will be able to follow along with some success. However, the reality is that most schools place students in mainstream classes for some portion of the school day before they have had time to acquire academic language skills in English.

Classes such as language arts/English, social studies/history, math and science generally require a higher level of language proficiency and skills, especially as the grade level increases. Although the degree of difficulty of a class depends on many variables, some generalizations can be made. Reading and language arts tend to be the most difficult subject areas for ESL students and usually the last areas for mainstreaming, unless instruction is individualized to meet their ESL needs. Social studies or history classes

are also very challenging due to vocabulary and cultural concepts embedded in instruction and materials. ESL students sometimes have an easier time dealing with math and science classes, when manipulatives, visuals, and experiential learning are used. [Although some students arrive with superior math skills and do well in spite of limited English proficiency, math still involves many difficult language-related tasks.]

Therefore, the team needs to be more discriminating when placing students in these subject areas. While it may be appropriate to place intermediate or advanced-level students in certain content classes, they must receive the instructional support, classroom accommodations and teacher sensitivity to their unique linguistic, cultural and academic needs.

When selecting content courses for ESL students, the team should try to place them in classes with teachers who either have coursework or experience in working with linguistically and culturally diverse students. They are better prepared to individualize instruction based on language and cultural needs. Some districts are already arranging in-service training for all teachers and school personnel to learn about working with multicultural populations. For recommended reading on instructional strategies, materials and resources for content area teachers, see resources listed in Appendix H, p. 165.

The final question the team asks itself is whether ESL students will be better served through alternative content instructional services. Beginners and students with low literacy levels in their native language will not be able to function successfully in most content area classes. Even students with intermediate and advanced level skills may benefit greatly from special sheltered content courses or academic tutoring.

Some districts in Vermont with larger numbers of ESL students and/or a strong commitment to providing quality educational programs have developed special content area instructional programs or classes to help ESL students. In cases where students do not have true "equal access" to the curriculum, districts should make an effort to find the local resources to include such programs or classes in the curriculum. In one way or another, ESL students' content instruction needs must be addressed and special alternative classes may prove the most effective means.

C. Alternative Academic Programs or Classes

There are several types of programs designed to help ESL students continue learning content area concepts and skills appropriate for grade-level work while they are acquiring English language skills.

1. Content-based Language Instruction

In content-based ESL classes, language teachers use special instructional strategies and basic content concepts and skills to teach ESL students. They focus on developing academic language skills rather than survival and social communicative skills. Often, ESL teachers consult with content teachers in order to identify relevant grade-level topics in different subject areas. These topics are the point of departure for second language

learning. The teacher's goal is to reinforce content instruction and prepare ESL students for transition into grade-level classes. In some schools with a sufficient number of students, ESL teachers and content teachers are beginning to work together to integrate language and content instruction. They may actually team-teach a class in a specific subject area.

The ***Cognitive Academic Language Learning Approach (CALLA)*** is a curricular and content-based instructional approach intended to serve as a bridge between an ESL and grade-level academic classes. It is based on a cognitive model of learning and develops academic language skills, including reading and writing, through content area topics in science, mathematics, and social studies. Students are also taught to use learning strategies as aids in comprehension and retention of language skills and content area concepts (Chamot & O'Malley, 1986).

For more information about content-based language instructional approaches, often referred to by other names: sheltered content; content ESL; and the Cognitive Academic Language Learning Approach ('CALLA'), see Appendix H, p. 165.

2. Sheltered Content

A *sheltered content* class is a content class (e.g., social studies, science, literature, math) which is taught by a content teacher to a group of second language learners. Though the teacher focuses mainly on teaching concepts, sensitivity to language needs and a repertoire of basic techniques for "sheltering" language are important. The teacher uses a variety of visual aids, demonstrations, cooperative learning strategies and simplified instructional language to make core concepts more comprehensible to ESL students. Sheltered classes provide intermediate-level students an opportunity to learn content when schools do not offer academic instruction in their primary language. These classes are intended to prepare students to participate in grade-level classes.

Several districts in Vermont have developed sheltered content classes with special curricula in science and social studies for ESL students at the secondary level. For more information on sheltered instruction, see Appendix H, p. 165.

3. Content Area in the Native Language--In districts where there are sufficient numbers of ESL students from a particular language group, students often receive bilingual content area instruction in reading, social studies, science and math in their native language while they are simultaneously learning English as a Second Language and acquiring academic language proficiency. This approach requires a bilingual teacher with a bilingual/bicultural endorsement and appropriate grade level or subject area endorsements.

4. Native Language Support in the Content Areas (Bilingual Aide or Facilitator)--For districts with smaller numbers of ESL students from one language group or many from *different* language groups, another alternative would be to provide students with native language tutorial support in some content areas. Having a tutor who communicates in their own language is especially beneficial for beginning students and students with low literacy levels in their native language. A bilingual tutor could work with students to develop basic literacy skills or content concepts and skills in subjects where students are far behind academically.

Bilingual tutors can either work directly as facilitators in the classroom with students or provide individual or small group instruction in the ESL classroom. In schools with clusters of underschooled students from the same language background, this latter approach can build up basic concepts needed for success in any educational program and also provide survival orientation for students with little previous schooling.

III. Acculturation or Counseling Services

When culturally and linguistically diverse immigrant and refugee students enter schools in Vermont, they are faced with the enormous challenge of making friends and adjusting to a culture very different from their home culture. Every student brings his own unique experiences and coping styles, but most will naturally feel alone and vulnerable at some point. They will not see many other students around them who share their language or cultural background, and this can be unsettling, especially if they feel stigmatized by their differences.

If students are to make a smooth adjustment to school and community, they need more than fluency in English; they need to know that they are accepted and respected by their teachers and peers. They need to know that their languages and cultures, while not those of the majority, are nevertheless equally valued and appreciated.

There is much schools can do to create such a *school climate* and facilitate the process of social and cultural adjustment that culturally and linguistically diverse students inevitably go through. Becoming aware of the distinct stages of social and cultural adjustment and learning about students' families and countries are ways for school staff to support ESL students.

It should be emphasized that no one staff member can be held solely responsible for providing assistance in matters of social and cultural adjustment. The more staff members, students, and community members (including those with the same national origin as the student) who are involved in providing support, the greater the chances that the student will develop a positive ethnic identity and adapt in a healthy way to his new surroundings.

Schools should begin by surveying staff members and the student body to find people who have a special interest or previous experience in helping ESL students adjust socially and culturally. Even if they have never received specific training and experience in cross-cultural counseling, some may have developed cultural sensitivity and awareness through international travel, work or study, e.g., as Peace Corps Volunteers or exchange students. There may also be students from similar language & cultural backgrounds, who have adjusted successfully themselves and are eager to help others.

A. Social/Cultural Learning in the Alternative Language Program

Part of the ESL teacher's training is to work with their students on topics of social and cultural adjustment. Often ESL teachers have had personal experience learning another language, living in a foreign country, and adjusting to a new culture. They often can empathize with their students and find constructive ways to help them deal with situations. There are many excellent ideas and resources available for integrating the teaching of culture into ESL instruction.

The LCAP staff review and collect pertinent articles relating to social interaction and cultural adjustment of diverse groups, especially those who have settled in Vermont in recent years. We also consult with school staff frequently about issues of adjustment, or make referrals to individuals or programs that have more extensive knowledge of a particular language, culture or group (e.g., Southeast Asian refugee adolescents). For those interested in learning more about the cultures of their students and the adjustment process, see resources and materials included in Appendix H, p. 168.

B. Counseling

Guidance counselors often play an important role in providing support services to ESL students. They are in an excellent position to monitor the students' overall progress and act as contact person for students, especially at the secondary level where students change classes. The language and cultural barriers may make the American school system seem confusing and scary. Guidance counselors know the intricacies of the system and can help ESL students to adjust to it.[7]

Since schools in many countries do not employ guidance counselors, ESL students may not think to approach their guidance counselor for help in coping with social and/or academic problems. In some schools, guidance counselors are assigned students alphabetically; in others, one guidance counselor may be assigned to work with all the ESL students. Whatever the arrangement, guidance counselors who empathize with the language and cultural barriers ESL students face will make a special effort to inform them of their services and check in with them on a more frequent basis than other students. They will also communicate with the student's parents about the educational program and arrange for interpreting/translation services, as needed.

Guidance counselors and ESL teachers should pay particular attention to grades the student is receiving in academic classes and convene meetings of school staff if a pattern of failure appears. Early intervention can prevent "drop outs." Since the ESL teachers in most schools assume much of the responsibility for the identification, assessment, orientation and provision of appropriate services to ESL students, guidance counselors should work closely with them in making placement decisions and evaluating the students' progress in academic programs. ESL teachers may also be able to advise on the appropriateness of testing.

All guidance counselors need to be aware that the English language proficiency of a student is not a measure of intelligence. They should be realistic in their expectations of students and not form premature judgments about their abilities. ESL students are entitled to the same access to information on career choices, post-secondary education and training, etc. as every other student. ESL teachers and guidance counselors also need to keep abreast of whether students are meeting graduation requirements on time, so that they do not end up short of credits or courses needed to pursue individual goals.

See Resources for Acculturation v. Counseling, Appendix H, p. 168.

[7]However, guidance counselors often have very large case loads of students. ESL teachers may often be able to assist in many of the counseling tasks.

IV. Vocational Instruction

Some ESL students want the opportunity to gain vocational skills at the secondary level. They should be informed of different vocational training choices and given a chance to explore their own interests, aptitudes and abilities. ESL students certainly benefit from a basic introduction in their native language, through an interpreter, prior to enrolling in a specific vocational area.

It is also important to mention that there has been a historical trend in education to track students from certain minority backgrounds into vocational education classes, without considering the students' aspirations. Some people have assumed that students, particularly at the high school level, without English language skills need a vocationally-oriented program. While this may, in fact, seem like the most practical placement, the student should always make a vocational choice based on a strong personal interest. ESL students should not be placed in vocational classes simply because that's where all the other students of their nationality have been placed, because it's more convenient for the school system than providing other learning opportunities.

ESL students who are enrolled in vocational areas will require special language and basic skills instruction in order to participate effectively in vocational classes. The Carl Perkins Act, P.L. 98-524, specifically mentions limited English proficient individuals as a group that is "disadvantaged" and is assured equal access to quality vocational educational programs. Funds that are awarded to vocational programs for the purposes of providing equal access for "disadvantaged" students should provide services appropriate to meet the special language and academic needs of limited English proficient students.

An excellent four module resource series for vocational centers with limited English proficient students has been developed by the National Center for Research in Vocational Education. The *Serving Limited English Proficient (LEP) Students* series includes:

Module ESL 1	"Recruit Limited English Proficient Students for Vocational Programs;
Module ESL 2	"Conduct Intake Assessment for Limited English Proficient Vocational Students";
Module ESL 3	"Adapt Instruction for Limited English Proficient Vocational Students";
Module ESL 4	"Administer Vocational Programs for Limited English Proficient Students".

These materials are published and distributed by AAVIM, American Association for Vocational Instructional Materials, 120 Driftmier Engineering Center, The University of Georgia, Athens, Georgia 30602, (404) 542-2586.

Another excellent source of materials is a publication available from the National Center for Research in Vocational Education entitled, *Students with Limited English Proficiency: Selected Resources for Vocational Preparation*. Call 1-800-637-7652 to order.

V. Special Needs Services or Accommodations

Special Education

The May 1970 Office for Civil Rights Memo states that "school systems may not assign students to special education programs on the basis of criteria that essentially measure and evaluate English language skills. The additional legal requirements imposed by Section 504 also must be considered when conducting investigations on this issue."

Since there has been an historic pattern of placing ESL students in special education classes without full consideration of language and cultural differences, districts are advised to proceed with caution when trying to determine whether ESL students have special needs. On the other hand, neither should districts totally ignore the possibility that ESL students may also have special needs.

In order for the process to operate fairly, school personnel must first understand the characteristics of second language learners and provide them with instructional opportunities for language and academic development. An excellent background article on the topic of ESL/Special Education is *Preventing Inappropriate Referrals of Language Minority Students to Special Education* by Shernaz Garcia and Alba Ortiz, published in the NCBE *New Focus*, No. 5, June 1988.

Based on the frequent number of requests from schools for technical assistance on evaluation of ESL students for special education services, there is definitely a need for specific state guidelines on the identification & referral process, evaluation, placement and appropriate programming for this population.

However, it is beyond the scope of this handbook to provide the kind of detailed information on ESL/Special Education issues that is required. Readers may refer to Chapter Six, p. 82, Screening of NELB Students, Special Needs, for a *brief introduction* to this subject.

For more in-depth information on ESL/Special Education identification, assessment, placement and instructional services, see Appendix G, p. 118, Assessment and Appendix A, p. 7, Legal Resources for ESL students.

VI. Adjunct Support Services

The formal educational program of language, social and cultural, and academic services can be *supplemented* by many other resources from the school, community, and state/federal level. Some of the resources which may be available to enhance the educational programs of ESL students include:

Schools

- Peers who share the language and cultural background of new students, and are already integrated into the school, can assist in the orientation process and also explain basic concepts in the native language during the transitional period.

- English-speaking peers can be trained to tutor ESL students in the regular classroom or in other settings. They may focus on language, content subjects or culture.

- Members of various school groups--e.g., peer tutors, AFS, foreign language clubs, National Honor Society--may also tutor ESL students at their own school or another school in the district.

- Schools or districts can offer summer school programs to continue ESL instruction in the summer months.

- Librarians can assist in the development of oral and literacy skills by reading and sharing appropriate grade-level books with ESL students. They can also order books which represent the ethnic and experiential backgrounds of ESL students for their schools.

Community

- Parents or community members from ethnic groups, e.g. refugee/immigrant associations, can be recruited to facilitate in the classroom or provide tutorial assistance in areas as literacy or content.

- Organizations which place volunteers in schools to do service work can be contacted. Examples of such organizations are: Volunteer Connection; Retired Senior Volunteer Program.

- Bilingual community-based organizations (cultural associations) and international groups (e.g., Returned Peace Corps Associations - Green Mountain Volunteers) may be invited to do slide shows or presentations about other cultures.

- Some colleges and universities have established ESL tutoring programs and may be interested in having students work with immigrant and refugee children from the public school system. In addition to providing supplemental educational and social assistance, college students may give ESL students an insider's view of college life.

State/Federal

- The Vermont Student Assistance Corporation (VSAC) Outreach Programs provide information and counseling for students recognized as having the potential to be successful in college. They have worked with secondary level ESL students and helped them with self-awareness, decision-making, goal-setting, career exploration, college selection, financial aid application and information.

- The Upward Bound Program at Johnson State College is another program that has assisted some ESL students to develop greater self-esteem and improve their study skills and knowledge of content areas. Services include summer programs, as well as workshops and support groups during the school years.

Resources which might be helpful in developing supplemental or adjunct services include:

Ashworth, M. (1985). *Beyond Methodology, Second Language Teaching and the Community.* New York: Cambridge University Press.

Center for Applied Linguistics. (1976). Continuing English Studies During the Summer--Hints for Sponsors and Teachers of School Age Children. *Elementary Education Series, No. 5. Indochinese Refugee Education Guides.* Arlington, VA: Author.

Cook, B. & Urzua, C. (1993). The Literacy Club: A Cross-Age Tutoring Paired Reading Project. *Program Information Guide No. 13.* Washington, DC: National Clearinghouse for Bilingual Education.

Gaies, S.J. (1985). *Peer Involvement in Language Learning.* Orland, FL: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich.

McCloskey, M.L. & Williams Dorage, L. (1990). *English Everywhere! K-3: An Integrated ESL Curriculum Guide* (Chapter 1 Supplement). Atlanta, GA: Educo Press.

INDIVIDUALIZED INSTRUCTIONAL PLAN

Student's Name _____ Grade Placement _____

School _____

Literacy skills in Primary/Home Language _____

Years of schooling in the student's primary Language _____

Years of schooling in the U.S. _____ English Proficiency Classification _____

ESL Instructional Level _____

Briefly outline the services the student will receive under each relevant area of the school curriculum. Refer to p. 126, "Appropriate Instructional & Support Services," if further background information is needed to complete the plan.

I. Alternative Language Program	
Program Model: (e.g. ESL pull-out tutorial, In-class ESL, Class Period ESL) What type of special instructional program will be provided to support the student's second language development for social and academic purposes?	
Daily Schedule & Location of Instruction: How many hours of daily language instruction will be provided for the student? In what location?	
Instructional Staff: Who will teach the second language instructional program?	
What training & experiences does this person have in the field of second language teaching?	

Curriculum Objectives or Specific Performance Outcomes: (based on grade and language proficiency level of student) (to be completed by language instructor)	
Instructional Approaches, Strategies and Materials: (to be completed by language instructor) What instructional approaches, teaching strategies and materials will be used that are appropriate to this student's English language proficiency, prior schooling and linguistic/cultural background?	
Assessment--Monitoring of Progress: What formal or informal procedures or instruments will be used to assess the student's language development in English?	
How often will assessment occur?	

II. Content Area Instruction	
Alternative Academic Program: What special instruction will be provided to help students learn in academic subjects for which they lack sufficient English skills? (e.g., academic tutoring in the native language, sheltered content or content ESL)	
Instructional Staff: Who will provide this special instruction in content areas? List by subject area. (e.g., bilingual tutors, academic tutors, classroom or content teachers)	
Content Area Objectives: What broad content area objectives will be set that are appropriate to the student's language proficiency and cognitive/grade levels? (Attach objectives of individual content area teachers.)	
Partial Mainstreaming: In what classes will the student be mainstreamed? What teaching strategies and instructional modifications will be made to accommodate the student's language proficiency and cognitive levels in specific subject areas?	

III. Acculturation & Counseling Services	
Orientation & Cultural Learning What services or strategies are available to orient the student to the school and community and provide opportunities for cultural learning?	
What opportunities are there for the student to share and develop his/her primary/home language and culture?	
What linguistically and culturally appropriate counseling services & career guidance will be provided?	
Who will be responsible for providing acculturation & counseling services?	
IV. Adjunct/Supplemental Services	
Indicate any *supplemental* instructional programs and related services that will be provided to the student. (e.g., gifted and talented, programs for recent immigrants, programs for students with low levels of literacy or mathematical skills, such as chapter 1), supplemental tutoring by volunteers, etc.	

Adapted from Parker, R.C. (1993). Individualized Instructional Plans. *A Program Process Guide* (pp. 84-93). Providence, RI: New England MRC.

Seven Ways ESL and Mainstream Teachers Can Work Together

Nancy E. Dubetz

Second language learners benefit in two important ways when ESL and mainstream teachers choose to work together. First, children participate in more meaningful learning when teachers pool their expertise to plan for instruction. ESL professionals can share with mainstream teachers their knowledge of second language acquisition and ways to make content comprehensible to ESL children. Mainstream teachers, on the other hand, can share their knowledge of child development as well as teaching and assessment strategies across a wide variety of content areas. Second, ESL children are exposed to repeated opportunities to explore language and concepts in more than one context when ESL and mainstream teachers coordinate their curriculum.

There are a number of models that ESL professionals and mainstream teachers can consider in working together to meet the needs of ESL children in the mainstream classroom. The following list identifies seven approaches that are currently being used:

1. ***Co-teaching or Tandem-teaching:*** Co-teaching is a model in which an ESL teacher and a mainstream teacher teach together for either all or part of the day. Tandem-teaching is a type of co-teaching that is being used in Great Britain (Ellis, 1985). In tandem-teaching, the mainstream teacher generally teaches a lesson first. Then the ESL teacher reviews the content of the same lesson with the ESL students in the mainstream classroom using strategies appropriate to second language learners while the mainstream teacher works with the other students. In co-teaching models, ESL and mainstream teachers work together to monitor the growth and development of ESL children. Co-teaching requires that ESL and mainstream teachers have common planning and teaching time.

2. ***Cooperative Planning:*** This model was originally created for ESL children with special learning needs mainstreamed into regular classrooms; however, the model can be used with all ESL students. In this model, teachers meet on an ongoing basis to discuss and plan for individual children. Hudson and Fradd (1990) suggest a nine-step process to cooperative planning. In this process, teachers select the students they want to focus on, identify discrepancies between these students' abilities and the demands of the mainstream classroom, and develop a plan including instructional interventions and a monitoring system for each child. They also suggest that teachers focus on only a few students each semester so that the work load does not become overwhelming.

3. ***Peer-coaching:*** In this model, teachers observe in each other's classrooms and provide feedback to each other as they work together to try out new teaching strategies (Showers, 1985). Teaching approaches such as cooperative learning and whole language are currently being tried in both mainstream and ESL classrooms. Providing opportunities for mainstream and ESL teachers to observe in other's classrooms help these teachers learn and improve together.

4. ***Teaching Buddies:*** In this model, a mainstream teacher *buddies* with an ESL or bilingual teacher to share teaching ideas, pair students from each classroom for peer tutoring, and share insights about the language and cultures of the students. Often these teachers have classrooms located close to each other and share a common planning period, though they may meet before or after school or during lunch.

5. ***Creating a Common Resource Area:*** ESL and mainstream teachers can work together to develop a resource center with professional books and teaching materials that focus on educating second language learners in the context of the mainstream classroom. There are many materials available that offer helpful suggestions on how to meet the needs of ESL children in mainstream classrooms. Periodically, groups of mainstream and ESL teachers should meet in the area to share and discuss new additions.

6. ***Teacher-led Workshops:*** Many schools are now encouraging teachers to take part in their own staff development. Workshops presented by teams of mainstream and ESL teachers often prove to be more helpful than workshops by outside presenters because the teachers are familiar with the needs of the children and staff in the school. Successful workshop topics have included: (1) the adaption of developmentally appropriate teaching strategies for ESL children at different grade levels, and (2) strategies for assessing the growth and development of ESL children in mainstream classrooms.

7. ***Teacher-Research Projects:*** Doing research in the classroom can be much easier when teams of teachers work together to solve problems. To find ways to help ESL children adjust to the social and academic demands of school, ESL and mainstream teachers can explore together the effectiveness of different teaching approaches. There are many resources now available to help teacher-researchers get started. For example *Working together: A Guide for Teacher Researchers* (NCTE) provides many good suggestions on how to do teacher research.

Administrative support for shared planning time and shared staff development is critical to the success of many of the models described above. Compensation for collaborative programs can sometimes be secured through mini-grants, which are often available through professional organizations, teachers unions, and/or parent-teacher groups, and are frequently advertised in magazines for teachers.

The success of ESL students in our school hinges in our ability as teaching professionals to provide them with an integrated learning experience in a setting in which they feel safe and valued. As ESL professionals and mainstream teachers, we share the responsibility of educating increasing numbers of children who come to school speaking little or no English. Hopefully, the models described above will provide ESL and mainstream teachers with ideas to help them face this challenge together.

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NON-ENGLISH LANGUAGE BACKGROUND (NELB) STUDENT UPDATE

Name/Grade: School: Language(s) identified: LEA:	PLEASE MAKE ANY CHANGES (ADDITIONS/CORRECTIONS), I.E., NAMES, SCHOOLS, ETC.

A) PRIMARY/HOME LANGUAGE SURVEY: (NELB) NON-ENGLISH LANGUAGE BACKGROUND STUDENT Based on the Home Language Survey, has this student identified a language other than English on the survey form? (See Enclosed Survey) The student is from a non-English language background if one or more of the following apply: . the student's primary language (first acquired) is other than English regardless of which language the student now uses most frequently, . the language most often spoken by the student is other than English, . a language other than English is spoken in the student's home.	Yes	No	OFFICE USE ONLY: SURVEY ON FILE YES/NO DATE: B) Language identified as primary (first acquired) on the survey by the student or family (see list of languages attached):

Student Profile:		Yes/No	Date	Grade
Date of Enrollment	Graduated			
Date of Arrival in U.S.	Dropped Out			
Date of Birth	Retained			
Place of Birth(State/Country)	Moved			

C) SCREENING: MULTI-CRITERIA ASSESSMENT TO IDENTIFY AND DETERMINE NELB STUDENT'S EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND AND ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY.

Following are recommendations for providing comprehensive screening procedures. These preliminary steps are essential components in the overall assessment process and include:

- Interview(s) with parent, guardian(s) and student(s);
- Review of student's educational and health records;
- Observations and referral(s) by school personnel;
- Assessment of language proficiency using a combination of formal and informal methods.
- Whenever possible, informal and formal native language proficiency testing is recommended.

D) LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY ASSESSMENT: Indicate results of language proficiency test(s) given. A combination of informal and formal assessments should be used to classify students' English language proficiency. The following formal language proficiency assessment instruments are available from our office.

TESTS	SKILLS TESTED	TEST RESULTS
I. IPT (Idea Proficiency Test)		
II. LAS (Language Assessment Scales)		
III. SLEP (Secondary Level English Proficiency)		
IV. Other Tests		
TESTS	**SKILLS TESTED**	**TEST RESULTS**
V. Native Language Assessments		

ACADEMIC SKILLS INFORMATION			
SKILLS TESTED:	Yes/No	Methods Used	Test Results
English Reading/Language Arts			
Native Language Reading/Language Arts			
Other Academic Skills			

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E) ENGLISH LANGUAGE SUPPORT PROGRAM(S) Serving English as a Second Language Was this student placed in an instructional program designed for second language learners during the 1992/1993 and/or 1993/1994 School Year? If yes, check appropriate program and year listed below:				
ESL Models:	**1992/1993**	**If available, give hours/periods per week**	**1993/1994**	**If available, give hours/periods per week**
Pull-Out Tutorial				
In-Class ESL Instruction				
Class Period ESL				
High-Intensity Language Training				
Content-based ESL				
BILINGUAL Models:				
Self-Contained				
Tutorial				
F) OTHER LOCAL/STATE/FEDERAL INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAMS Check other instructional program(s) serving Non-English Language Background student.	**1992/1993**	**If available, give hours/periods per week**	**1993/1994**	**If available, give hours/periods per week**
Chapter 1				
Special Education				
Vocational Education				
Other Program(s):				

WHAT ALL ESL STUDENTS SHOULD KNOW

New Arrivals Need to Know About...	Second or Third Year Students Need to Know...
Food, clothing, shelter and how to ask for it	Formal grammar and metalanguage
Survival vocabulary, example: how to ask to go to the bathroom	Learning strategies and metacognition (e.g., note-taking, outlining, questioning)
Communicating health and safety needs	Test-taking skills
Following directions	Following directions from many school personnel
Requesting information	Reading comprehension and reading strategies
Communicating emotions	Study skills
Appropriate indoor/outdoor behavior	Writing process and product
Social rules	Public/formal speaking
Cafeteria foods and how to eat them	Information gathering skills
Good nutrition	Research strategies and project processes/learning strategies
Good personal hygiene/health	Cooperative learning and group dynamics skills
Classroom specific vocabulary and directions	Idiomatic English
Student expectations, teacher expectations, and classroom agenda	Affective sharing skills
Being streetwise at school and in the community	Cultural exchanges
Being streetwise about advertising	Language of power/empowerment
Money	Vocabulary media, legal, health
The geography of the school and the town	Learning about culture
School and community resources	Connecting the known to the unknown
Appropriate attire	Integration into the school community
Basic content vocabulary and concepts	Connecting the known to the unknown
Basic literacy skills	Integration into the school community
Basic interpersonal communication skills (listening, speaking in social situations) (BICS)	Street savvy
	Advanced content vocabulary concepts, and processes
	Non-verbal communication
	Cognitive/Academic Language Proficiency (CALP)
	Paralinguistic features (e.g., intonation, stress)
	Discourse features (CALPS)

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RESOURCES FOR LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS

Districts interested in receiving assistance to design or enhance their alternative language program can contact the LCAP. This office provides materials, training and technical assistance. It can put your school in touch with other schools or resource persons who have had experience teaching LEP students in situations similar to your own. The program can also direct you to regional resource centers that offer workshops, conferences, and technical assistance.

ORGANIZATIONS

Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL)
ERIC Clearinghouse on Language & Linguistics (ERIC/CLL)
418 22nd Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20037
TEL: (202) 429-9292

Joint National Committee for Languages
300 Eye Street, NE, Suite 211
Washington, DC 20002
TEL: (202) 546-7855

Language & Cultural Affairs Program
University of Vermont Office of Rural Education
500 Dorset Street
So. Burlington VT 05403
TEL: (802) 658-6342

National Association for Bilingual Education (NABE)
1220 L Street, N.W.
Suite 605
Washington, DC 20005-4018
TEL: (202) 898-1829

National Clearinghouse for Bilingual Education (NCBE)
118 22nd Street NW
Washington, DC 20037
TEL: (800) 321-NCBE

Natural Center for Research on Cultural Diversity and Second Language Learning
399 Kerr Hall
University of California
Santa Cruz, CA 95064
TEL: (408) 459-3500

New England Multifunctional Resource Center for Language & Culture in Education
144 Wayland Avenue
Providence, RI 02906-4384
TEL: (401) 274-9548

New England Superintendents' Leadership Council
The Education Alliance at Brown University
144 Wayland Avenue
Providence, RI 02906
TEL: (401) 274-9548

Northern New England TESOL (NNETESOL)
American Language & Culture Center
New Hampshire College
2500 North River Road
Manchester, NH 03106-1045
Contact: Dianne Dugan
TEL: (603) 668-2211

Office of Bilingual Education and Minority Language Affairs
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue Room 5086
Washington, DC 20202-6642 TEL: (202) 205-5463

Saint Michael's College
Center for International Programs (CIP)
M.A. TESL Program
Winooski Park
Colchester VT 05439 TEL: (802) 654-2300

School for International Training (SIT)
Master of Arts in Teaching Languages Program
Kipling Road
PO Box 676
Brattleboro VT 05302-0676 TEL: (802) 257-7751

Teachers of English Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL), Inc.
1600 Cameron Street, Suite 300
Alexandria, VA 22314-2751 TEL: (703) 836-7864

U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights
Region I
McCormack Post Office and Courthouse, RM. 222
Boston, MA 02109 TEL: (617) 223-9689

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STAFF/TRAINING

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CURRICULUM AND MATERIALS

For a complete listing of curriculum, teacher reference and instructional materials, please request the LCAP Resource Library Bibliography. Library materials are available on a two-week loan basis for examination purposes.

The LCAP also has a large collection of commercial ESL publishers' catalogs containing ESL, bilingual, content area, teacher reference, and multicultural materials.

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RESOURCES FOR CONTENT AREA INSTRUCTION

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INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

For a listing of instructional materials for teaching ESL students in different content area subjects, please contact the LCAP to obtain information on how to borrow materials for examination purposes.

RESOURCES FOR ACCULTURATION & COUNSELING

ORGANIZATIONS

Indochinese Psychiatry Clinic
(Clinical Services)
AND
Harvard Program in Refugee Trauma
Harvard School of Public Health
(Research & Training Component)
Brighton Marine Public Health Center
77 Warren St.
Boston, MA 02135

Contact: James Lavelle, M.S.W.
TEL: (617) 562-5550

National Center for Research on Cultural Diversity and Second Language Learning (NCRCDSLL)
University of California at Santa Cruz
141 Kerr Hall
Santa Cruz, CA 95064

TEL: (408) 459-3500

National Coalition of Advocates for Students
Clearinghouse for Immigrant Education (CHIME)
100 Boylston St., Suite 737
Boston, MA 02116

TEL: 1-800-441-7192

National MultiCultural Institute (NMCI)
3000 Connecticut Avenue, N.W., Suite 438
Washington, D.C. 20008-2556

TEL: (202) 483-5233

International Society for Intercultural Education, Training and Research (SIETAR)
International Secretariat (Professional Membership Association)
Suite 200
808 Seventeenth St., NW
Washington, DC 20006

Contact: David Fantini
TEL: (202) 466-7883

The Counseling Service of Addison County
Intercultural Counseling
89 Main St.
Middlebury, VT 05753

Contact: Suzanne Rice
TEL: (802) 388-6751

For listings of other refugee assistance programs, cultural associations, and community organizations which may be able to assist with acculturation and counseling, see Appendix B, p. 32, Resources for Family/Community Involvement.

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Hammond, R.E. & Hendricks, G.L. (1988). *Southeast Asian Refugee Youth: An Annotated Bibliography*. Minneapolis, MN: SARS Project, CURA, University of Minnesota.

Insight Multi-Cultural Communication, Inc. (1986). *Homeland Around the World: Cambodia, Laos, Vietnam, China, Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia, Central America, Mexico* [Video]. Santa Cruz, CA.

Interface Network, Inc. (1987). First Experiences. [Video]. *Classrooms without Borders Series*. Portland, OR: Author.

Jorgensen, K. & Stokes Brown, C. (1992). *New Faces in Our Schools: Student-Generated Solutions to Ethnic Conflict: Grades 9-12*. San Francisco, CA: Zellerbach Family Fund.

Jorgensen-Esmaili, K. (1988). *New Faces of Liberty: A Curriculum for Teaching about Today's Refugees and Immigrants: Grades 5-8*. San Francisco, CA: Zellerbach Family Fund.

Kane, B. (Producer & Director). (1988). *Vietnam: When Night Comes.* [Video]. Washington, DC: Asia Resource Center.

Louisiana Public Broadcasting. (1991). Validating the Student's Culture in the Classroom. *English as a Second Language series.* [Video]. Baton Rouge, LA: Author.

Louisiana Public Broadcasting. (1991). Working with Culturally Diverse Parents. *English as a Second Language series.* [Video]. Baton Route, LA: Author.

Mann, J. (Producer & Director). (1983). *The Cutting Edge: Southeast Asian Adolescents in Transition.* [Video]. Eugene, OR: New Dimension Media, Inc.

National Clearinghouse for Bilingual Education. (1989). Educating Refugees: Understanding the Basics. *Forum,* XII, 3. Silver Spring, MD: Author.

National Clearinghouse for Bilingual Education. (1990). MRC Profile (on counseling LEP students) *Forum,* XIII, 4. Washington, DC: Author.

National Coalition of Advocates for Students. (1991). *New Voices: Immigrant Students in U.S. Public Schools.* Boston, MA: Author.

Salett, E. (Producer). (1988). *From Survival to Adaptation: The Adolescent Refugee Experience.* [Video]. Washington, DC: National Multi-Cultural Institute.

Saville-Troike, M. (1978). *A Guide to Culture in the Classroom.* Rosslyn, VA: National Clearinghouse for Bilingual Education.

Schwartz, M. & Dunn, G. (1986). (Producers and Directors). *Mi Vida: The Three Worlds of Maria Gutierrez.* [Video]. Santa Fe, NM: One West Media.

Siegel, T. (1987). (Director). *Blue Collar and Buddha.* [Video]. Evanston, IL: Siegel Productions.

Simek, M. (Producer). (1987). Cultural Diversity: Meeting the Challenge. [Video-English]. *Newcomers to America Series.* Portland, OR: Pacific Standard Television.

Simek, M. (Producer). (1989). Introduction to American Public Schools. [Video-Vietnamese & English] *Newcomers to America Series.* Portland, OR: Pacific Standard Television.

Simek, M. (Producer) (1989). Refugee Youth in America. [Video-Vietnamese & English]. *Newcomers to America Series.* Portland, OR: Pacific Standard Television.

Taylor, O.L. (1988). *Cross Cultural Communication: An Essential Dimension of Effective Education.* Washington, DC: Mid-Atlantic Equity Center.

Taylor, G.W. (1990). (Producer). *Skin: A Dramatized Production about Visible Minority Teenagers and the Problems They Encounter.* [Video]. Falls Church, VA: Landmark Media

Winskowski-Jackson, C. (1991). Evaluation of Culture Components in ESL Programs. In Pennington, M.C. (Ed.) *Building Better English Language Programs.* Washington, DC: NAFSA.

Zanger, V. (1991). (Producer). *How We Feel: Hispanic Students Speak Out.* [Video] Falls Church, VA: Landmark Films, Inc.

STEP FIVE: MONITORING AND GUIDING STUDENT PROGRESS & PROGRAM EFFECTIVENESS

The final step in providing effective educational services for ESL students is actually a series of steps for monitoring and guiding student progress:

I. Ongoing monitoring of development of language and content skills/knowledge as the student progresses through the individualized program of instruction (Assessments of student work are used to determine appropriate instructional approaches, adaptations, materials and coursework).

II. Determining when the student has acquired the academic language proficiency necessary to be placed full-time at the appropriate grade level in the regular instructional program without ESL services (exit criteria);

III. Post-service monitoring to ensure successful transition into the regular instructional program;

IV. Periodic program evaluation to ensure that language and academic support services for ESL students are effective.

The procedures, strategies, and criteria that the district will use to implement monitoring activities should be explained in the Assessment Plan. See Appendix G, p. 106, outline for developing an assessment plan.

This chapter of the handbook briefly describes the four components of the monitoring process and suggests procedures, strategies and criteria to carry them out. Each district determines the details of criteria, tests, strategies and procedures that it will use in the process.

I. MONITORING OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE & ACADEMIC DEVELOPMENT

The purpose of monitoring the ESL student's English language and academic development is:

- to assess the student's ongoing progress and achievement in English as a Second Language and content areas in order to plan and modify instruction accordingly;
- to periodically reclassify the student's ESL proficiency level (reclassification);
- to promote the student to different instructional levels within the ESL program on the basis of growth in English language skills (reassignment).

A. Procedures

Formal monitoring procedures should be developed to evaluate the progress of ESL students while in the alternative language program.

It is recommended that the ESL teacher(s) and relevant content teachers meet formally at least quarterly to review the language and content development of their mutual students and discuss cases of reclassification of language proficiency and ESL instructional emphasis. A meeting should be held at the end of the school year to discuss progress and recommendations for placement in the next school year.

The ESL teacher closely monitors the student's *development of social communicative language and academic language proficiency* during the school year. Strategies for ongoing assessment of language skills are recommended below. In addition to informal assessments and traditional evaluations of students, many districts administer an ESL proficiency test and/or a curriculum-referenced ESL test, once or twice a year, for the purposes of reclassification of students' language proficiency and determining instructional levels.

The student's ESL and content teachers should collaborate on approaches for monitoring the student's development of *academic language proficiency and content skills and knowledge*. At the elementary level, this means collaboration between the ESL teacher and the classroom teacher. In the middle and high schools, the ESL teacher will need to work with relevant content area teachers to evaluate academic progress. Informal approaches for assessing academic achievement are also discussed below.

All results of formal and informal assessments should be recorded in the student's file or portfolio. The results are shared with the parents of the students at periodic meetings and at an end of the school year meeting, where the ESL Coordination Team discusses the student's placement for the upcoming year.

B. Strategies/Tests

The goal of monitoring progress is to keep track of the students' growth in language and content area skills/knowledge and to guide instruction. Instructional staff need to know whether students are acquiring the academic language proficiency that enables them to listen and comprehend class discussion, complete reading and writing assignments in content areas, etc. It is important that the main focus of monitoring be on progress in acquiring language and academic skills required to meet grade-level content and process expectations.

The LCAP recommends using a combination of ongoing informal assessment approaches and periodic formal tests so that there are multiple criteria for assessing the language and content growth of the student. These assessments must be sensitive to language and cultural backgrounds of the students. For organizational purposes, information from selected performance-based tasks, appropriate tests and student work samples can be combined in individual student portfolios.

1. Informal Assessment

Increasingly, informal assessment strategies are being used to monitor both language and academic development of students at the elementary and secondary levels. These strategies are also being adapted for use in assessing the language and academic development of ESL students. There are many different techniques, both unstructured and structured, to conduct informal assessment.

Informal assessment for monitoring development of *language skills* includes both performance assessment procedures and portfolio assessment. These are defined by Valdez Pierce and O'Malley in *Performance and Portfolio Assessment for Language Minority Students* (1992) as follows:

Performance-based assessments for language--A performance-based assessment is: "an exercise in which a student demonstrates specific skills and competencies in relation to a continuum of agreed upon standards of proficiency or excellence" and "reflects student performance on instructional tasks and relies on professional rater judgement in its design and interpretation."

Performance-based assessments can be used to assess development of English oral language, reading, and/or writing skills. Methods for implementing performance-based assessment include observations by the ESL teacher or classroom teacher and/or self-assessment by the student. Usually, rating scales, rubrics, matrices or checklists based on performance outcomes and criteria, ideally for a specified level of the ESL curriculum, are used to assess this development in a consistent manner.

Portfolio assessments for language--Portfolio assessment is: "the use of records of a student's work over time and in a variety of modes to show the depth, breadth, and development of the student's abilities; the purposeful and systematic collection of student work that reflects accomplishment relative to specific instructional goals or objectives; can be used as an approach for combining the information from both alternative [informal] and standardized [formal] assessments; and has as key elements student reflection and self-monitoring".

Informal assessment approaches can also be used by language and content teachers to assess whether students are acquiring the *academic language skills and comprehension of subject matter required to do grade-level work.*[1]

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[1]The Center for Applied Linguistics is currently being funded through the National Center for Research on Cultural Diversity and Second Language Learning to conduct important research designed to ultimately assist schools in assessing academic language of language minority students.

One of the major problems in assessment of ESL students has been that most formal tests, i.e., language tests and academic achievement tests, are inadequate (Short, 1993). In the article "Assessing Integrated Language and Content Instruction", author Deborah Short states,

> "Students and teachers realize that most assessment instruments actually test both content concepts and language ability, particularly reading comprehension and writing. Because language and content are intricately intertwined, it is difficult to isolate one feature from the other in the assessment process. Thus, teachers may not be sure whether a student is simply unable to demonstrate knowledge because of a language barrier or whether, indeed the student does not know the content material being assessed. Yet a distinction needs to be drawn, especially if a student is not succeeding in a course."

Though she acknowledges that many schools will continue to use formal standardized tests to compare students on national norms, Short emphasizes that these are "no longer satisfactory as the sole measures of student achievement." In her article she presents a framework or "assessment matrix" designed to help teachers decide which areas of language and content to assess: problem solving, content area and communication skills, concept comprehension, language use, attitudes and individual and group behaviors. She briefly explains informal methods and demonstrates how they can be used to evaluate specific areas. Informal methods described include: skill and concept checklists; reading/writing inventories; anecdotal records and teacher observations; student self-evaluations; performance-based tasks and manipulatives; written essays, reports and projects; oral reports and presentations; interviews.

Short's concluding paragraph presents the best argument for using informal assessment.

> "After all, at the heart of instruction is the desire to help our language minority students learn, and at the heart of assessment is the need to determine whether our students have learned. We must assist them in that process by trying new alternatives that are not so language bound, time restrictive, or autonomous. Further, we must advocate assessment practices that mirror instructional practices. Let us focus on our students' strengths and give them opportunities to demonstrate ability, skill, and knowledge through the medium that suits them best, whether oral or written or even, in the case of beginner students, pictorial. Let us familiarize them in advance with the assessment measures and give them adequate time to complete the tasks. Let us help them take some responsibility for their own evaluation, especially through tools such as student checklists, reports, and portfolios. Let us become alternative assessment advocates for our language minority students."

For further information on the purpose, types, design, administration, and scoring of informal assessment approaches to use in monitoring ESL students, see Appendix G, p. 117.

2. Curriculum or criterion-referenced assessments

Another method of assessing English language or academic development is through the administration of a curriculum-referenced or criterion-referenced test (CRT). Some districts choose to use a CRT to assess how well students have mastered specific skills or learning objectives for sequenced ESL proficiency instructional levels. CRTs can also be used to measure progress in other curriculum areas. Usually, such tests are based on the local curriculum developed by teachers in the district.

3. Standardized, norm-referenced assessments

Some districts seek to compare language skills and academic achievement of ESL students to that of a broader segment of the student population, using standardized tests with national norms. There is considerable debate about the use of such tests with both the general student population and also with linguistic and culturally diverse students.

The State of Vermont is moving toward a standards model of assessment which means setting performance criteria and standards for all subject areas. School districts recognize the need to have a balance of assessments, using multiple and authentic methods designed by teachers and based on publicly-defined standards.

Realistically, school districts will continue to use some standardized, norm-referenced tests. The LCAP urges districts to carefully consider whether such tests accurately assess students' academic achievement, i.e., what they have been taught and learned. Standardized norm-referenced or curriculum-referenced tests are sometimes used to measure reading/reading comprehension, math and academic achievement of NELB students who have been enrolled in ESL or mainstream classes. Although formal tests may provide survey information about whether ESL students are acquiring grade-level skills and concepts, they are often less reliable and valid for ESL students due to factors such as linguistic and cultural bias or lack of previous experience with standardized tests.

Districts which opt to include ESL students in district-wide standardized testing should never treat these tests as the *sole* measure of achievement. They might also consider making testing accommodations, since ESL students are confronted with processing both language and content concepts. Allowing students more time to complete test sections, having a bilingual aide explain instructions in the primary/home language, doing practice test sessions to prepare students for standardized test formats, and reviewing tests for bias are some ways to accommodate the needs of ESL students.

4. *Vermont Statewide Assessment Program: Portfolios and Uniform Assessment*

Vermont's statewide assessment program may provide another source of useful information about ESL students' growth and development in the areas of writing and math problem-solving over time. As part of the movement to make assessment a more accurate reflection of *actual student performance*, Vermont schools are using portfolios at all grade levels to collect "best pieces" of writing and problem-solving in math. All students, with help from teachers, choose their best pieces to include in portfolios. These pieces of daily student work are compared with established standards for good writing and or math skills.

Portfolios of student work serve many purposes, including: helping students to focus on areas that need improvement; guiding teachers in their instruction; providing administrators and school board members with some information about how well students are learning; and providing the state of Vermont with some data for a statewide picture of how well students write and solve math problems.

As part of the Vermont Assessment Program, portfolios of randomly selected students at several grade levels are evaluated by a group of trained teachers to see how well they meet the standards of good writing (5th and 8th grade) and mathematics (4th and 8th grade). In addition to the Portfolio Assessment, the Vermont Assessment Program is supported by the Uniform Assessment given to all Vermont students in grades 4, 5, and 8. The Uniform Assessment requires students to participate in two sessions where they are asked to respond to a writing prompt and solve a number of open-ended math problems.

The Vermont Department of Education has established criteria for *Students To Be Assessed*. These criteria include information on *Students Eligible for Exclusion from the Uniform Assessment*.[2] According to the Vermont Department of Education, students with limited proficiency in English may be exempted from the Uniform Assessment if they meet the following criteria:

1. "The student is: a) a Limited English Proficiency student from a traditionally non-English speaking country; and b) has been enrolled in a school in the United States for less than two years."

2. "An exclusion may also be granted to a student who cannot read and comprehend written English. This determination rests with the professional discretion and judgement of local staff based on appropriate language acquisition assessment results."

Participation in *portfolio development*, on the other hand, is for *all students*. Because portfolio activities occur as part of regular classroom instruction, all students are expected to have a portfolio that includes examples of their learning activities.

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[2]For more specifics on portfolio participation, accommodations, exclusion from the Uniform Assessment, and reporting students not tested, school assessment coordinators should contact the Vermont Department of Education Assessment Coordinator, Mary Ann Minardo at (802) 828-3352.

II. DETERMINING WHEN TO EXIT STUDENTS FROM SERVICES

Districts should have exit criteria for determining when students no longer need ESL services. The rationale for exit criteria is:

- to ensure that students meet a high level of English proficiency required for success in academic classes and receive sufficient and appropriate language and academic support services until it is attained;

- to ensure that students are not segregated in a dead end program once they are fluent English proficient.

In the process of monitoring the English language development of students, the ESL teacher(s) will recommend students to be considered for exit from the alternative language program. This would include all students who appear to have developed the academic language skills necessary to participate meaningfully in the regular instructional program.

According to Office for Civil Rights' Policy (September 1991 Policy Update), district procedures for determining when students with limited proficiency in English are no longer in need of special language assistance should be based on *multiple criteria.* At a minimum, the following basic standards for exit criteria must be met:

> "Exit criteria must be based on *objective standards.* The district should be able to explain why students meeting these standards will be able to participate in the regular classroom."
>
> "Exit criteria should require that students not be exited from the alternative language program unless they can read, write and comprehend English well-enough to participate meaningfully in the program. Exit criteria that simply test a student's oral language skills are inadequate. (Keyes, 576 F. Supp at 1518, noting importance of testing reading and writing skills as well as oral language skills.)"
>
> "Finally, alternative programs cannot be 'dead end' tracks to segregate national origin minority students."

A. Procedures

Before a student can be exited from a program, the ESL Coordination Team must collect and review all exiting data (formal and informal assessment results, observations, records of academic work). This process requires objective proof of fluent English proficiency and consensus among the ESL teacher, classroom/content teachers, guidance counselor, principal, ESL Coordinator, and parent/guardian(s) that a student is ready to be exited from ESL services.

In most districts, decisions to reclassify students as fluent English proficient and exit them from ESL will be made in the spring of the school year. Only students at the advanced ESL instructional level are be considered for program exit.

The ESL Coordination Team should document all data--informal and formal tests, portfolio data, and teacher observations--supporting the decision to exit a student from ESL services. Reasons for exiting the student from services should be briefly explained.

The team gives the parent/guardian(s) written notification, in the home language if necessary, or verbally notifies them of the exit decision and new instructional placement in an exit meeting. Parents should also be given information about their right to contest the reclassification. The district maintains record of this notification in the student's folder. Relevant instructional personnel receive a report of the student's reclassification, and any pertinent language or learning needs identified through the exit procedures.

ESL students should not be exited from ESL services until there is documented evidence that they are able to perform grade-level work in English. The district should use the same standards or assessment measures that it uses with English-speaking students. If it uses a standardized test to measure students' academic achievement for a comparison on the national level, this should be one of the exit criteria. If other standards or informal assessments are used to measure academic achievement, these may be used as criteria. The guiding principle is that districts maintain the same high expectations of achievement for all students and continue services for as long as needed.

B. Recommended multiple criteria for determining when to fully exit a student from a ESL services[3]

The best assurance that students will be exited from ESL services only when they have acquired academic language proficiency is to set sufficiently high standards. Multiple assessments of language and academic development should be given over a period of time and kept in the student's portfolio as documentation.

In general, the ESL Coordination Team should consider students ready for exit only when they demonstrate near-native fluency level or competence on multiple measures of language and academic development. It is up to the school district to establish *specific performance standards and criteria for exiting*. Those involved in developing performance standards and criteria and judging whether ESL students have met them must have a knowledge of the structure and the content of the discipline for a given performance.

[3]These are based on sample exit criteria designed by Robert Parker in "Multiple Criteria for Partial or Full Exit from ESL Services".

A student exiting ESL should meet the following standards of performance:

1. ***Proficiency in Oral Skills***--evidence of ability to comprehend and speak English at the level of peers of the same grade level for both social and academic purposes.

2. ***Proficiency in Reading Skills***--evidence that the student is able to read *in content areas* at the appropriate grade level for academic purposes.

3. ***Proficiency in Writing Skills***--*evidence that the student is able to write at the appropriate grade level for academic purposes.*

4. ***Evidence of mastery of skill objectives for advanced ESL instructional level***

5. ***Documented evidence of successful student performance in content area classes in which the student is already mainstreamed.***

6. *Other criteria*

Possible methods of determining whether students meet multiple criteria for exit from ESL include:

Informal Assessments

- Performance-based assessments of language and content skills using rating scales, rubrics, matrices or checklists--e.g., structured interview, questionnaire, oral presentation, story retelling, writing samples, functional dictation, reading/writing inventories, cloze tests

- Portfolio assessments of student work including: (pieces of work chosen by the student, essays, research papers, journals), creative projects, course-subject quizzes and tests, lab reports, group work, and student self-evaluations of work

- ESL teacher observations based on formal checklist or performance-criteria for fluent English proficiency

- Anecdotal records and criteria-based observations of student progress by teachers in whose classes the student is partially mainstreamed

- Student interviews to assess student knowledge

Formal Assessments

- Comprehensive ESL proficiency test (listening, speaking, reading and writing skills)
- District developed curriculum-referenced test for evaluating mastery of ESL program objectives correlated to the curriculum, administered by the ESL teacher
- Criterion-referenced or standardized, norm-referenced test(s) of language, reading/reading comprehension, or subject area skills needed at the student's grade level

Additional Methods

- Review of course work grades
- Student interview to assess readiness for full exit from ESL services
- Parent/guardian observations

C. Resources

For further information on exit criteria, the following resources are recommended:

Bell, J. (1988). *Entry and Exit Criteria for Title VII Programs.* [Workshop Guide]. Albuquerque, NM: Evaluation Assistance Center-West.

De George, G.P., (1987/1988). Assessment and Placement of Language Minority Students: Procedures for Mainstreaming. *NCBE Focus Paper #3.* Washington, DC: NCBE.

Fairfax County Public Schools. (1992). *ESL Assessment Guide.* Fairfax, VA: Author.

Miramontes, O. (1988). Reclassification of Limited English Proficient Students: Assessing the Inter-relationship of Selected Variables. *NABE Journal,* 12(3): 219-242.

Parker, R. (1993). Alternative Assessment. *Designing an Educational Program for Low-Incidence Numbers of Limited English Proficient Students* (pp. 61-97). Providence, RI: New England Multifunctional Resource Center.

Philadelphia School District. (1987). *Handbook for Principals Regarding Students with Limited English Proficiency.* Washington, DC: NCBE.

III. POST-SERVICE MONITORING TO ENSURE SUCCESSFUL TRANSITION INTO THE REGULAR INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM

Office for Civil Right's policy requires that students' performance be monitored after they are exited from an alternative language program. The purpose of post-service monitoring is to ensure that students reclassified as fluent English proficient make a successful transition into the regular instructional program. A successful transition is one in which the student adjusts socially and is able to comprehend instruction, speak, read and write well enough to participate in class, take tests and complete assignments without difficulty. Because the level of linguistic and cognitive difficulty can increase drastically as students move into higher grade levels, it is important to monitor their educational program for three years.

A. Procedures

The district assessment plan should provide written description of responsible monitoring personnel, time intervals and methods for monitoring the performance of students exited from ESL services. The plan specifies a process for re-evaluating the situation, if the student begins to fall behind in the regular instructional program. It also describes various types of support and follow-up service available to students who have difficulty with the transition.

Within two weeks of full exit from ESL services, the ESL Coordination Team will follow-up to see whether the student is adjusting well to the academic situation without language and social support. Close monitoring is especially important during this early stage of transition to make sure the student does not experience frustration and failure due to a premature exit from ESL.

Procedures should provide for three years of periodic monitoring of a student following reclassification to fluent English proficient. A designated member of the ESL Coordination Team, often the ESL teacher, is responsible for contacting the student's content teachers at the end of each quarter. A combination of objective data (grades and academic test scores) and subjective feedback (observations by teacher(s), other relevant school personnel, student, parents/guardian) is important.

The goal of the post-service monitoring is to ascertain whether the student is experiencing success in academic classes. The following questions and criteria will assist in determining whether the student's performance compares favorably with grade-level peers and the instructional placement is successful:

***Objective Data**--should be maintained long enough to determine whether students are fully participating in all of the school curriculum.*

1. Academic Information--What objective evidence is there of successful grade-level performance in academic areas?

- Courses taken
- Grades
- Portfolios, including writing samples, essays, learning logs, journal entries, research papers, creative projects, quizzes and tests.

2. ***Assessment Information***--What assessment data is available comparing the student's achievement with monolingual English peers?

- Tests taken, scores and dates
- Is the student maintaining appropriate grade-level performance on district measures of achievement (either standardized tests or informal assessments)?

Subjective Feedback

1. ***Observations*** by teacher(s) in whose class(es) the student is enrolled

- Is the student learning the subject matter expected of students at that school level?
- Is the student well-adjusted socially and culturally?

Equal Access

- Is the student receiving equal access to program options, e.g., college-bound courses, as well as other programs?

Other Criteria

- *Attendance Record?*
- *Parent or student observations about the educational program*--What is the level of satisfaction?

If students are not succeeding in the regular instructional program, the person conducting post-service monitoring brings it to the attention of the ESL Coordination Team. It is up to the team to revise the student's academic program and arrange for whatever supplemental services are needed.

Of course, students exited from ESL services can experience academic difficulties due to factors other than English language proficiency. It is important to consider the student in context. For example, to adequately identify the source of problems other factors--e.g., equal access, instructional approaches, experiential background, learning style, motivational influences, and cultural differences--should be given serious consideration. If instructional interventions and further investigation rule out these factors as the cause of poor academic performance, a *culturally and linguistically appropriate* evaluation of special needs may be appropriate.

IV. PROGRAM EVALUATION

Districts are responsible for periodically evaluating their program to ensure efficacy of academic and language support services for ESL students. Program design, resources, personnel and practices are all important to evaluate, but the ultimate test of program effectiveness is the success experienced by the students. This success is measured by the degree to which students demonstrate linguistic growth, academic achievement and social integration.

An effective educational program is one in which the students experience success in the total school environment, i.e., the ESL program, broad school curriculum, and social and extracurricular activities. A school staff that is aware of cultural and linguistic diversity, committed to the ideal of equal educational opportunity, and knowledgeable about current instructional practices for ESL students can make a huge difference in the quality of education culturally and linguistically diverse students receive.

When an evaluation shows that students are not experiencing success after a reasonable period of time in a program, Office for Civil Right's policy requires that a district take steps to determine the cause of the program's failure and modify it accordingly.

A. Procedures

The preceding discussion of reassessment focuses primarily on monitoring the progress of *individual* students. The district also needs to have procedures which explain how it will periodically evaluate the *overall effectiveness of its program* (Program Evaluation Plan).

Collection of data on students while they are in language assistance programs and after they exit from services is essential for determining how this population performs academically in comparison to the general school population. This data should be useful in both monitoring of individual students and the overall program effectiveness.

In addition to using data collection, interpretation and reporting as a way to evaluate program effectiveness, the district should have regularly scheduled evaluations to assess the quality of the program. The evaluation would look at how well the district is meeting stated goals and objectives and the quality of resources, personnel and practices implemented.

The actual implementation of overall evaluation of the district's program will depend on the size of the district's population and the type of program. Although all districts are required to evaluate the effectiveness of their services, obviously the evaluation done in a district with only a few students will not be as formal or in-depth as for a district with a larger number of ESL students.

In districts with larger numbers of ESL students, quarterly or biannual meetings between the district ESL coordinator, ESL teacher(s), relevant principals and interested ESL Coordination Team members are recommended. The purpose of such meetings would be to discuss the progress of ESL students in the district, the implementation of program services and any needs and concerns identified.

RESOURCES FOR PROGRAM EVALUATION

Several resources are available which should help districts in evaluating the level of coordination and implementation of appropriate educational and ESL programs. These are:

Friedlander, M. (1991). The Newcomer Program: Helping Immigrant Students Succeed in U.S. Schools. *Program Information Guide No. 8* (pp. 26-28). Washington, DC: National Clearinghouse for Bilingual Education.

Pennington, M.C. (Ed.). (1991). *Building Better English Language Programs: Perspectives on Evaluation in ESL.* Washington, DC: NAFSA: Association of International Educators.

Menkart, D. (1993). Multicultural Education in the School Environment. In NCBE *Multicultural Education: Strategies for Linguistically Diverse Schools and Classrooms.* Washington, DC: NCBE.

Parker, R.C. (1993). Program Review/Service Development for LEP Enrollments. *Designing an Educational Program for Low-Incidence Numbers of Limited English Proficient Students* (pp. 109-113). Providence, RI: New England Multifunctional Resource Center.

TESOL Policy Statements--Materials available from TESOL, *Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages* Professional Association, 1600 Cameron Street, Suite 300, Alexandria, Virginia 22314-2751. TEL: (703) 836-0774.

TESOL, Inc. (1976). *Guidelines for the Certification and Preparation of Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages in the United States*: Alexandria, VA: TESOL.

TESOL, Inc. (1991). *Standards and Self-Study Questions for Elementary and Secondary Programs.* Alexandria, VA: Author.

TESOL, Inc. (1985). *Statement of Core Standards for Language and Professional Preparation Programs.* Alexandria, VA:

TESOL, Inc. (1992). *TESOL Standards: Ensuring Access to Quality Education for Language Minority Students.* Alexandria, VA: Author.